MAXIMUM ROCK & ROLL

NOV. 2003 NUMBER 246 $4

FM

NAVES

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
#148, 150-151, 153-154, 156 pt. 1, 156 pt. 2, 158-163, 166, 168-172, 174-175, 178-181, 184-211, 213-245 are as stated above in subscription info.
See page after next.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
Ad Reservations: call to make sure.

Ad Copy In (with payment):
by 15th of previous month.
Issue out: by 2nd week of following month.

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1/6 page: (2 3/8" x 5") $30
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BACK COVER: Provoked

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See page 5 for foreign distribution info.

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(use this mainly for comments & letters. Use phone for ads & other business stuff)

TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we review.

TIM BROOKS

- V/A-Tower 13-LP
- NO TIME LEFT-10" / VATICANS-45
- CLIT 45-Kid Aren't Alright-EP / UNKIND-LP
- ANNALISE / GUNMOLL-split EP
- THE HAVE NOTS / THE SOVIETTES-split EP
- STIFF LITTLE FINGERS-Inflammable Material-LP
- KAAOS-Ristiinnaulittu Kaaos-LP
- THINK I CARE-LP / MG-15-Caos Final-LP
- WORLD BURNS TO DEATH-No Dawn Comes-EP
- CALVARY-The Will of the Way-EP

ROB COONS

- D.S.B.-No Fight No Get-EP
- UNCURBED-Chords for Freedom-10"
- THE RITES-LP & live
- LIFE SENTENCE-LP
- HE WHO CORRUPTS-Ten Steps to Success-LP
- DISCARGA-Que Venha Abaixo-EP
- MG-15-Caos Final-LP
- V/A-Victim of Safety Pin-LP
- PHOBIA-Grind Your Fucking Head In-LP
- IN THE WAKE OF THE PLAGUE-live

ARWEN CURRY

- Brooklyn & Manhattan, New York City, NY
- Federal Hill & Olneyville, Providence, RI
- Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA
- Hurricane Isabel
- REACTIONARY 3-Reactionary Songs-EP
- DIR YASSIN-God Forgotten Place-EP
- VENA CAVA-So Evolved-CD
- TOYS THAT KILL / FLESHIES-split EP
- MANIFESTO JUKEBOX / I EXCUSE-split EP
- WORLD BURNS TO DEATH-No Dawn Comes-EP

PAUL CURRAN

- CRIATURA-LP / BOπR-EP
- STUCK-UPS-45 / CAREER SUICIDE-EP
- FILIPTOPS / GLORYHOLES-split EP
- FIG 4.0 / STAND-split / V/A-Tower 13-LP
- COLDERA-EP / DISCARGA-EP
- BRAMBILLA-LP / AMERICAN TOURISTS-EP
- 17th CLASS-LP / ABUSE-EP / I.R.D.-EP
- ANNALISE / GUNMOLL-split EP
- KAMIKAZE-LP / NET WEIGHT-LP
- V/A-Fåk Danmark-LP / EVIL ARMY-EP

JONATHAN FLOYD

- HUSBANDS-live
- GUNMOLL / ANNALISE-split EP
- BRAMBILLA-Little Terror Creek-LP
- ENABLERS-Sweet Fuck All-CD
- MANIFESTO JUKEBOX / I EXCUSE-split EP
- MEXICAN BLACKBIRDS-Just to Spite You-CD
- STRIKE ANYWHERE-Exit English-CD
- TOYS THAT KILL / FLESHIES-split EP
- VENA CAVA-So Evolved-CD
- NO PEOPLE / BRAZIL UFO-live

JEFF HEERMANN

- THE BLACKS-Black Snake-EP
- EASTSIDE SUICIDES-CD
- MEXICAN BLACKBIRDS-Just to Spite You-CD
- NTX + ELECTRIC-We are the Wild Beast-CD
- WHITE+OUTS-Solid State-45
- STUDDOGS-The Gospel According to-CD
- GLASS CANDY-Bicicleta Emocional-EP
- POPULAR SHAPES-Bikini Style-CD
- SNEEZE-Chronic Wave-EP
- V/A-Tower 13-LP

KENNY KAOS

- SMUT PEDDLERS-Ten Inch-10"
- STUCK-UPS-Last Chance-45
- THE BLACKS-Black Snake-EP
- FITTS-I Have to Laugh-EP
- THE PONYS-Wicked City-45
- THE DISTRACTION-Autodestruct-45
- THE HAVE NOTS / THE SOVIETTES-split EP
- V/A-Tower 13-LP
- SATURDAY NIGHT KIDS-Birthday Girl-45
- THE DIRTY BURDS-Dirty Shame-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- THE VATICANS-Commotion-45
- THE PONYS-Wicked City-45
- BLACK REBELS / NEARLY DEADS-split EP
- THE BLACKS-Black Snake-EP
- WILDEBEESTS / KNAUGHTY KNIGHTS-split 45
- WHITE+OUTS-Solid State-45
- V/A-Fåk Danmark-LP
- MEXICAN BLACKBIRDS-Just to Spite You-CD
- LAS ULTRASONICAS-live
- NEIL HAMBURGER-DVD

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible—one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

RAY LUJAN

STRIKE ANYWHERE-Exit English-CD	ENABLERS-Sweet Fuck All-CD
THE STAND BY ME-Don't Ever Change-CD	THREE MINUTE MOVIE-Dramatic City-CD
M.O.T.O.-Kill M.O.T.O.-CD	MANIFESTO JUKEBOX / I EXCUSE-split EP
THE RITES-LP / TURBOSTAAT-Flamingo-LP	BEN GRIM-Retro-CD / THE HINT-CD
ERASE ERRATA-CD / THE DUDOOS-CD	SEX PISTOLS-live, finally

BOBBY MANIC

WILL RISK

THE DISTRACTION-Autodestruct-45	VENA CAVA-So Evolved-CD
THE HAVE NOTS / THE SOVIETTES-split EP	CALVARY-The Wll of the Way-EP
TOYS THAT KILL / FLESHIES-split EP	TOYS THAT KILL / FLESHIES-split EP
FILIPTOPS / GLORYHOLES-split EP	HE WHO CORRUPTS-Ten Steps to Success-LP
SWEETHEARTS-Luv-CD	BLACK FLAG-live

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

REACTIONARY 3-Reactionary Songs-EP	BLEEDING KANSAS-EP / CRIATURA-LP
17th CLASS-LP / CALVARY-EP	TRANSISTOR/TRANSISTOR-EP
CAREER SUICIDE-Sars EP	DON AUSTIN-EP / BRAMBILLA-LP
MANIFESTO JUKEBOX / I EXCUSE-split EP	THE RITES-LP / CLIT 45-EP / GTC-EP
ANNALISE / GUNMOLL-split EP	WRANGLER BRUTES-live

DONNA POOLE

NET WEIGHT-LP	THE VATICANS-Commotion-45
V/A-Victim of Safety Pin-LP	THE BLACKS-Black Snake-EP
FAGATRON-LP	FIND HIM AND KILL HIM-We Know-EP
I.R.D.-Aldrig Köpt, Aldrig Såld-EP	CLIT 45-Kid Arn't Alright-EP
FILIPTOPS / GLORYHOLES-split EP	FITTS-I Have to Laugh-EP

BRUCE ROEHRS

LIME CELL / WRETCHED ONES-live	THE RITES-LP / D.S.B.-EP
CRIKEY CREW / GRUESOME-split EP	CINDER / 33AT45-split 10"
CLIT 45-Kids Arn't Alright-EP	RADICAL UP / DEFECTIVE FORCE-split EP
SWELLBELLYS-Taking Care of Business-CD	RESISTOLEROS-Rock 'n' Roll Napalm-CD
SOCIAL DISTORTION-live	V/A-Fåk Danmark-LP

MIKE THORN

AMEBIX-CD / BLOWN TO BITS-EP	WORLD BURNS TO DEATH-No Dawn Comes-EP
DIR YASSIN-God Forgotten Place-EP	V/A-Victim of Safety Pin-LP
DON AUSTIN-Akron-EP	I.R.D.-Aldrig Köpt, Aldrig Såld-EP
MG-15-Caos Final-EP / TURBOSTAAT-LP	DISCARGA-Que Venha Abaixo-EP
UNCURBED-Chords for Freedom-10"	BRAMBILLA-Little Terror Creek-LP

RYAN WELLS

POPULAR SHAPES-Bikini Style-CD	WHITE+OUTS-Solid State-45
SNEEZE-Chronic Wave-EP	WILDEBEESTS / KNAUGHTY KNIGHTS-split 45
KEEN MONKEY WORK-Maniac and Violence-EP	COMETS ON FIRE-Field Recordings-LP
ZYMOTICS-Watch That Worm-EP	BLACK REBELS / NEARLY DEADS-split EP
FIRST TIME-You Can't Hurt Me-EP	V/A-Fåk Danmark-LP

ZINE TOP TEN

ARTCORE #19	REGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR #3
CASH FLAGG #1	SOBSTORY? #5
DEATH BY ROBOT #1	SOMETHING DELICIOUS THIS WAY COMES
DORIS #21	TOILET PAPER #5
RANT! #?	MISHAP #15

ZINE SHITWORKERS

Anandi	Aragorn
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Ariel Celeste	Catherine Cook
Rob Coons	Paul Curran
Andy Darling	Mikel Delgado
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#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Sacred Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel, Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#158/July '96. Workin' Stiffs, The Gain, Ashley Von Hurter, Haters, The Process, Brother Inferior, Judge Nothing, Break-ups, Not For Rent, "Roots of Punk: the Buzzcocks."

#159/Aug '96. Smugglers, Tone Deaf Pig-Dogs, Too Many Records, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Fun People, Fat, Drunk & Stupid, BrandNewUnit, Death Wish Kids.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#168/May '97. Cretin 66, Fishsticks,, Distemper, Enewetak, UK Subs, Luxo Champ, Jake Sayless, "Pioneers of Punk."

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile. Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#171/Aug '97. Violent Society, Strychnine, Idiots, Knuckle Heads, Race Traitor, Patrick Grindstaff, Misanthropists.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore Fanzine, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#237/Feb '03. Top Ten Records of 2002, "Music as a Weapon: Artists in Wartime," Dirt Bike Annie, Let It Burn, Stockyard Stoics, King Khan & Shrines, 625 Records, Feast Or Famine, Rudimentary Peni, Coachwhips, Self Defense.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola and San Francisco punk protest reports,John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Huymanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

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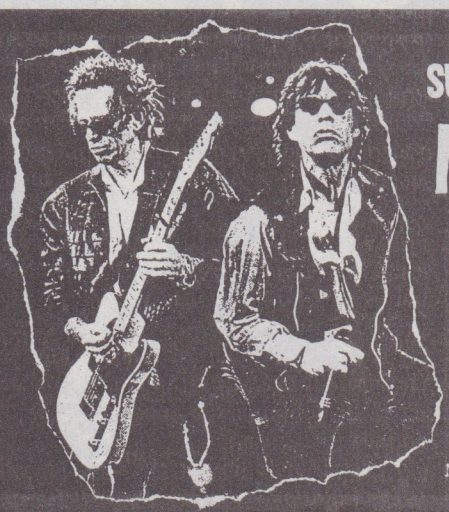

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SATURDAY, OCT. 4: Champion (WA), For the Crown (last show), the Damage Done (last show), Allegiance, Lights Out. Membership meeting @ 5 PM.

FRIDAY, OCT. 10: THE DWARVES, the Frisk (record release), This is My Fist, Scattered Fall.

SATURDAY, OCT. 11: Hammers of Misfortune, Bread and Water (TX), Garuda, Abandon, a Sleeping Irony.

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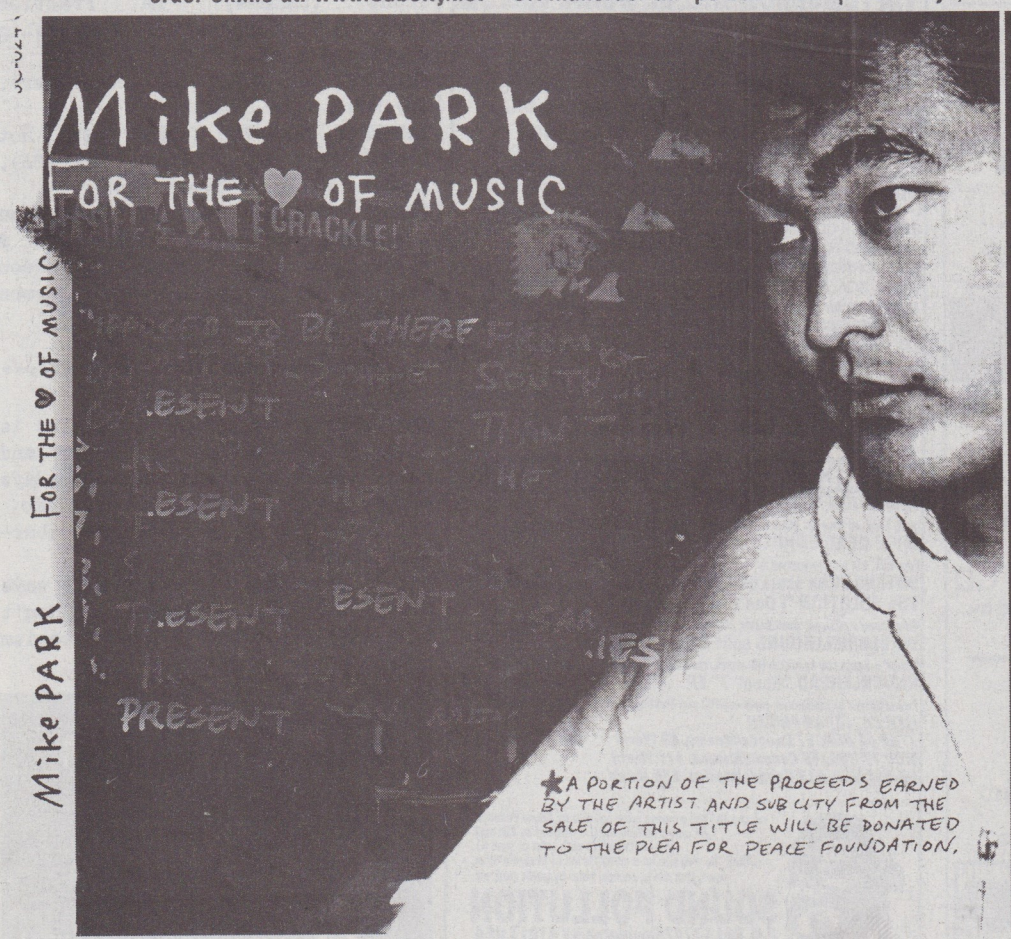

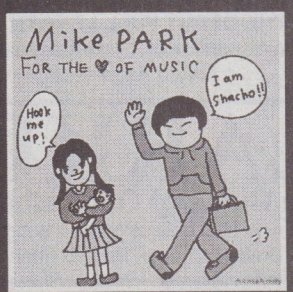

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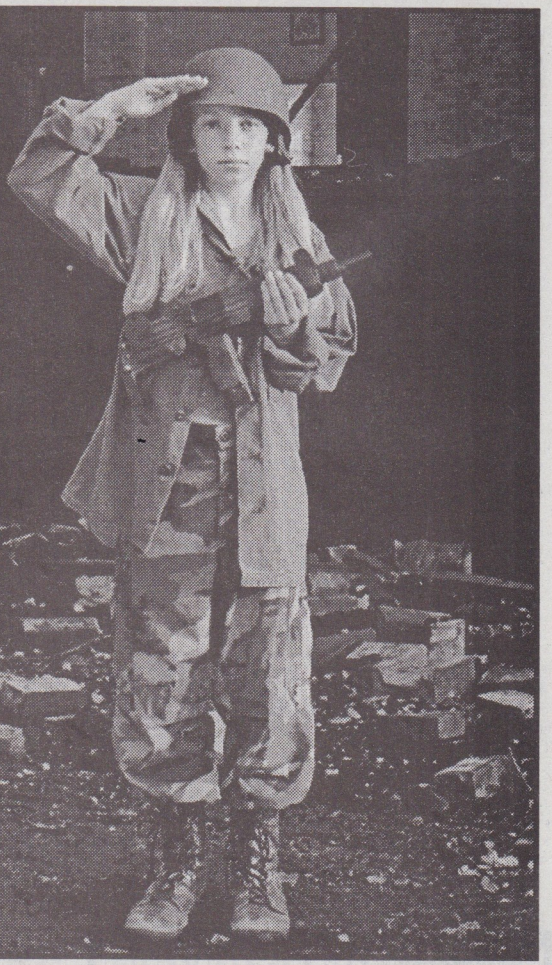

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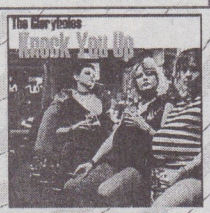

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Rudimentary Peni "Underclass" CD $10
Rudimentary Peni "Echoes Of Anguish" CD $10
Stalingrad "Long Lost" 10" $8.50
Think I Care "S/T" CD $11
Carpenter Ant/Race To Die 7" $3.50 (Skatecore!)
Carpenter Ant "Never Stop Skating" 7" $3.50
Forca Macabra "Çayeira Da Forca" LP $8.50
Nailbiter "Abused" LP $8.50 or CD $8.50
Religious War "Cracked System" LP $8.50
Rajoitus "Discography" CD $8.50
Action Directe "La Nouvelle Conspiration" LP $8.50
Artimus Pyle "Inheritance" 7" $5
Caustic Christ/Intense Youth 7" $3.50
Mass Separation "Tak Mau Lagi" $3.50 (Malaysia)
Bathtub Shitter "Fertilizer" 7" $3.50
Rot "Your Lie Is Gone – Your Day Has Come" LP $8.50
Capitalist Casualties "Planned Community" 6" $3.50
Anfo "La Sangre De Latino America" 7" $3.50 (Peru)
Widespread Bloodshed 7" $5
Unholy Grave/Catheter 7" $3.50
Unholy Grave "Against Terrorism" 7" $5
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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

MRR—
Just found out today about The Exploding Hearts and am crushed. Before getting too drunk, I wanted to write a letter to send my heartfelt condolences out to the family, the surviving band member, friends, and fans of these three. This is truly, truly heartbreaking! I've buried ten people since 1997, so any news like this is completely devastating for me. Take care of each other out there. Fuck!
Sean Shame, Tempe, AZ.

Hello *MRR*—
I was reading the Sept issue, on a Sunday feeling a bit down in the dumps, where's the next buck going to come from for the rent, when I suddenly came across the article on the Exploding Hearts. It hit me like some bullet in the head. I never heard of them and didn't know them—what struck me in the pictures of the band was how young they looked and full of life, and what a senseless way for the three members of the band to be wiped out, in a van accident on the highway.

Those three are never now going to worry about being in debt, paying the rent, watching some trashy movie, etc. So what the hell did I have to complain about? Here I was reading *Maximum rocknroll*, alive, embracing punk and life by the horns. What I am saying is, through all the shit we have to go through, enjoy things we take for granted, because we ain't here as long as we like to think we are and can be gone— just like that!
Thanks for listening.
Steve K. "Punk and Junk"
38 Moreton Road, Worcester park,
Surrey, Kt4 8tz, United Kingdom
PS—my thoughts go to the Exploding Hearts' family and friends.

Dear *Maximumrocknroll*—
Hi there. First-time writer, long-time reader. My subscription ran out shortly after Rev. Norb did, but I've kept up. Sometimes people accuse *MRR* of towing a lefty/radical line to the point of stupidity. Not so, not so! Not always. Not more than a lot of folks do. In fact, the people who make those "Baseless slogans! Pro-terrorism! Pro-murder!" kinds of accusations—such as Louis Yoelin, in his or her (seriously, how am I to know? Probably a guy, but 100% certain I cannot be. No offense intended, Lou) letter-cum-essay in #245, which is what spurred this here thing I'm writing—always seem a bit blowhardy.

But wait! What's this? In her otherwise masterful slam-dunk response to Lou's views, Anandi makes the following statement: "furthermore, the offer to 'give' land and peace to the Palestinian people is inherently racist—the Palestinian people should not need to wait for the Israeli state to 'give' them anything..." Hmm, says I. Well, true dat re: the part about how the Palestinians should not need to wait for the Israeli state to give them land. Unfortunately, upon the surface of the earth, the Israeli state controls a certain amount of land, which quasi-rightfully should be Palestinian. The exact amount is disputable by carbomb. OK. So, we've got to let the Palestinians get this land. There are three ways that land can be handed from one nation/state/etc. to another: 1) by Nation/State/Etc., "A" giving it to Nation/State/Etc. "B" of their own accord, 2) by Nation/State/Etc. "B" forcefully taking it from Nation/State/Etc. "A," or 3) earthquake or volcano or meteor reshaping the actual earth itself, which isn't as common as the first two. So, either the Palestinians are going to somehow win the military battle, or the Israelis are going to come around and hand over some land. Neither situation seems all that likely, but I'd vastly prefer the latter to the former, 'cause there'd be less bloodshed and probably, ultimately, dream-a-little-dream, less ill-will on each side of the fence, and I don't mean that stupid "fence" Israel is building right now either.

Next issue: why is it inherently racist to give the Palestinians land/peace? I'm confused by the use of the word "racist." Condescending, maybe. Arrogant, maybe. But racist? The word "racist" gets thrown around a lot lately, often wrongly so. Palestinians aren't Israelis, and vice versa; they each want their own country, and their own land, and whatever real-life solution happens is going to involve the creation of a viable Palestinian state. This is only as racist as, say, the Kurdish independence movement, or for that matter, geopolitical identity for any ethnic group from the Eskimos to the Tamils to the Irish. In my eyes, not very racist—more practical than anything else. It never sits well with me when the word "racist" is misused, because it has such a negative connotation—rightly so, eh? Let's leave "racist" for the racists, mmm hmm! Anyway, in order to create a Palestinian state—and one surely must be created, out of much of the current Israel, and it can't just be the badlands of Gaza or whatnot either, but that's beside the point—the Israelis must give the Palestinians land. It's not fair to call Lou a racist because he (or she) said this, or something akin. "Ignorant fool" will suffice. Am I one? Thank you, and I've got newsprint all over my fingers now.
Nato
natedisgusting@yahoo.com

Dear Nate—

First of all, thank you for your letter; no, you are not an ignorant fool, in my opinion; in fact, I think you're right. To be more specific; my use of the word racist was irresponsible, on the one hand. Furthermore, Nato is correct; in the political world that we live in, the Israeli government giving land up probably is the only realistic way that the Palestinians are likely to recover any of their lost ancestral lands. Though, just something to think about (as someone else pointed out to me)—the real problem is that talking about "giving" land to the Palestinians implies that it belongs to someone else (i.e., the Israeli state) which is a bit problematic. But I should've left it alone, given that I didn't have enough space for a thorough examination of the letter writer's use of language on top of everything else.

As for what it was that I meant, though—

I guess I just find the idea of a peace in which the Palestinians are as dependent on the Israeli state for its continued goodwill as they are now, under the occupation, galling. To be more exact, a situation where the Israeli government, for whatever reasons—international pressure, goodwill, whatever—has decided to "give" some land to the Palestinians, is a situation in which they can decide to take it back. Which means creating a situation in which we have a population of people of color in a position of dependence with relation to the Jewish population (which many people would argue is also a non-white population, but I have a hard time swallowing that in this day and age, and in particular, in this situation. In any case, in the hierarchy of privilege which unfortunately does exist, Jews are way, way whiter than the Palestinians) which is a truly questionable situation with relation to race politics. That's all.

But again, you are correct—that sentence should've been tossed. Thanks for calling me on it—I appreciate the opportunity for dialogue.

—Anandi

PS: Thanks for the positive feedback, too.

Hello everyone—

Shaiful here from *Zerox* zine, Rememories, Lead (II) Nitrate, and Han Yew Kwang from Singapore. As you all know, there has been a recent problem regarding certain people involved in HC-punk in South East Asia. In the July edition of *MRR*, there was a letter addressing this situation. Now, being part of the SE Asian hardcore punk community since 1996 (in Singapore to be specific), I urge everyone not to take the recent debacle as their conclusive decision when dealing with people from SE Asia (for idiots who suck at geography, South East Asia includes Indonesia, Brunei, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, etc.) Yes, rip offs and scumbags exist, but they are everywhere, not just in this region.

This matter is pertaining to what has been sent in to *MRR* by Busted Heads Records, regarding the rip off alert concerning a certain Stand Alone Records, supposedly from Singapore. Labels which have been victimized in this particular episode includes Busted Heads, Crimes Against Humanity, Some Strange Music and more. It has come to my attention that there is a particular "Abdul Hadi" from Singapore who runs Stand Alone Records and has ripped countless people off. Unfortunately, this issue is not as simple as that.

Yes, Stand Alone is a rip off. But, it is also important to know that it is not operated by Abdul Hadi!

Being a part of the Singapore hardcore scene for some time know, I have known Abdul Hadi to be one of the most hardworking, sincere, and honest people in the scene. While it may be human to make mistakes, he is definitely not someone to rip people off. He's a nice guy, and perhaps too nice. He is a victim of sabotage! You see, Abdul Hadi, as far as I know, is the vocalist for Social Intergration and runs One Voice Recs/Distro. Both are cool and worth checking out. Nothing more, and definitely not Stand Alone Records.

For those in the dark, due to postal service inconsistencies, it would be hard for huge parcels to go direct to Malaysia. There are always chances that any parcel sent to Malaysia will be stolen or confiscated. There are many reasons behind this, from paranoia to artistic conservatism to plain corruption. Hence a few people who have mailing addresses in Malaysia utilize addresses of their friends in neighboring country Singapore when awaiting large parcels. The parcels will then be handed over by the Singaporean addressee when his/her Malaysian friend comes to visit or vice versa. I know a few people who do this for safety reasons.

Abdul Hadi's address is no exception. He has helped a few people this way. However his address has been made use of by two scumbags who have ripped various labels off. From Busted Heads to CAH, and many more. These two scumbags are :

Azalea aka Borhan aka An, from Malaysia.

Jera, also from Malaysia.

Let's first talk about Azalea. The Hadi Azalea that you all saw in the address is not Hadi. It is meant to be for Azalea. Since the package will be arriving at Hadi's house, it has to be addressed to Hadi somehow, otherwise Hadi cannot receive it. Hence, you see a Hadi beside the Azalea. Azalea is actually a distro run by a guy called Borhan. I know for sure that this distro exists because I once received an email with his list (more on that later). So what does this Borhan do? Word is that he works in a bank (note that this is second-hand information) hence he is able to manipulate credit card systems. In doing so, he fucks with someone's account and uses it to "order" stuff. I say "order" because he didn't pay for it anyway. The stuff gets send to Hadi's address in Singapore and who gets the bad name? Hadi. Hadi has mentioned before that he was taken aback by the fact that Borhan's packages includes Metallica and Nirvana stuff (as mentioned on the CAH site, probably from gemm.com) and commercial hardcore stuff. Some of these items were placed in the Azalea Distro list, at fucked up prices (RM25 for a CD he never paid for, what the fuck?!)

So basically, Borhan of Azalea Distro made use of Abdul Hadi's address for his own gains. Nice guy on the outside, big time asshole inside. He is a new distro, no promotion, no one has heard of him and suddenly he has a huge catalog and he had the cheek to put down his mailing address (in the email which I have deleted). Besides ripping people off, he stabs a "friend" in the back and gives him a bad name. Fuck him.

Now, about Stand Alone Records. Stand Alone Records, I can guarantee, does not exist in Singapore. If it did, it would only make sense that people know about it. Singapore is a very small place, with an even smaller hardcore scene. It is impossible that Stand Alone Records, with its ambition of releasing a Totalitär CD, is a stranger to everyone. Stand Alone supposedly is run by Jera. A Malaysian. And Jera is someone who has ripped off some guy in France.

Jera is a stranger to Hadi, but Jera is a friend of Alfisharin, who is the c/o in Hadi's address, if you notice. What Jera did was that he asked Alfisharin to get permission from Hadi to use the Singapore address for parcels. Hadi, being the nice guy, agreed. However he did not give permission to mention Stand Alone Records. He only allowed a "c/o Alfisharin" on his street address, obviously to indicate that the parcel was meant for Alfisharin via Hadi.

About Totalitär, it's true, the CD did not exist. Apart from the fact that the band did not give permission, there was also news that the release was cancelled. So what does this Jera guy do? Lies to everyone that he will release Totalitär, and requests that people trade with him. Promises 40 CDs and disappears when he receives their stuff. He backstabs a friend (Alfisharin) and goes a stab further by exploiting a total stranger (Hadi). Ultimate scumbag.

So the end line is, Hadi has been made use of by two fuckers (Azalea aka An aka Borhan and Jera). Alfisharin, who has tried to help Jera, in the end gets shit on his face as well.

It disappoints me that the thriving HC scene in South East Asia is destroyed by rip offs in Malaysia and Indonesia. Malaysia and Indonesia have the best hardcore/punk scenes in the world, and a few bastards decide to fuck it all up. I also am aware that this will take some

time, and am also aware that opinions might change and the tables might turn.

Also—it has come to my attention that a particular Wan Hazril is mentioned on the CAH Site under the Rip Off Bastards notice by this line "also goes by the name of Wan Hazril."

Do not be mistaken, Wan Hazril has nothing to do with Stand Records or Azalea! What he has done is spread emails, from all sides, about this matter. He is basically spreading the statement which Stand Alone Recs has sent him and sending it to everyone. Which to me is a right thing to do, because everyone has the right to voice out about this issue, whether innocent or guilty because it will shed light on who is telling the truth or lie.

I have known Wan Hazril for quite sometime, and he has always been honest and fair. Please remove the misconception that Wan Hazril has anything to do with Stand Alone.

So what has happened? Well, some of our hardcore superheroes from Singapore and Malaysia combined forces to confront those guilty of this punk blasphemy. During a gig in Malaysia, organized by none other than Borhan of Azalea Distribution, we managed to confront both the aforementioned person as well as Jera (known also as Azra Affendi).

First, let's talk about Jera. Abdul Hadi, the main victim of this plot confronted him. What began as a slow, dig-out the truth talk became a heated confrontation which nearly exploded into a messy 12 against 1. I will spare the details but all I can say is, after much persuasion, Jera finally admitted that he was a culprit. He was given a few months grace to settle everything. The code of the day was "return what you took, pay back what you owe."

I know you're getting excited but bear with me. Borhan was next. Again, I will spare the details. There was another confrontation. By then, some people were drunk, thus making the discussion a lot more spicy. Fingers were pointed, but in the end, Borhan of Azalea admitted to fucking with the credit card system at the expense of Abdul Hadi. The code of the day was applied again, this time with a longer period, due to the extremity of the situation. Now, everyone is probably scratching their heads and wondering what would be so convincing about a brief explanation. Here's why.

1) The cheats were given the benefit of doubt, and the deal was that we would give them time to settle the matter. For those labels who were ripped off nowis the time! Make sure you are returned what you are owed. Feel free to make further complaints to anyone if need be if these "polite but concise demands" are not met.

2) Everything has been recorded on video. And I mean everything, to the kung fu kick which narrowly missed its target, the classic Malay curse words, even the personal identification cards of the culprits.

I would like to stress that I only do this to give a clearer picture of what is going on. It has nothing to do with credibility. Or to be a scene hero. Fuck all this credit rubbish. I leave my name, so people can contact me if they need be. And it's also only right. Too many people talk shit and sign off as anonymous. Which hinders any form of communication at all. I hope *MaximumRocknRoll* prints this so that people know what's up. If anyone else chooses to do so as well, feel free.

I am not perfect myself. As I type this, I owe many people zines, letters, and possibly even money. (Tomas Jernberg of Destination Records from Sweden, where are you? I owe you cash, I think.) Yes, I am slow and inefficient. Unfortunately, the expensive way of life here in Singapore does little to rectify that. I can come up with a thousand excuses. We all can, can't we? But I do not cheat. Cheating someone is a totally different thing altogether. Cheating and deceiving belongs to the corporate "normal" world we all are supposedly instinctively against.

My only advice is—and this was also a lesson for me—is that when dealing with anyone, from anywhere, be aware of who you're dealing with. If she/he's a slowcoach, be prepared to wait half a year for your trade returns. If she/he's fast, don't be a prick and take your time to order. If she/he wants a hundred CDs from you, don't be dumb and send them all within the next two hours. Instead, request for him/her to send his/her trade items to you first. It's actually common sense really. If your argument is that HC punk is supposed to be based on trust, I say wake up and get real. If there can be conflicting factions among the DIY community, there can also be rip off assholes, closet racists, corporate scum, and more. HC punk isn't as underground and honest as it used to be. I know, I shouldn't be saying this, because I was not around when HC was at its peak in the 80s, but I don't think you need a rocket scientist to tell you that things have changed.

So there. I'm done. Spread the word, and leave this open to discussion. Email me at prohibitedprojects@excite.com.

Regards—Shaiful

Blk 554 Bedok North St 3, #08-241, Singapore 460554

MRR—

My name is Tomas Rivera. I work with an organization called Warehouse 21 in Santa Fe, NM. We are a youth art space with numerous functions. You can visit our website at warehouse21.org. We have concerts with local and touring bands, we have a silkscreen studio, a radio show, art galleries, computer labs and many other programs. We are currently working to build up what we are calling a "radical library." We want this to include zines, books, and music which will be available to the youth community in Santa Fe. I was hoping people might be able to help us out with donations . Any and all help you can give would be greatly appreciated.

—Tomas Rivera

loveisnotaweakness@mail.com

Warehouse 21 / 1614 Paseo de Peralta Santa Fe, NM 87505

MRR—

Re: *Wiener Society (News from the Gulag.)* Bros & Sissies; due to recent insanity on my yard, the administration has launched a tactical offensive against us. We are currently locked in our cells and have undergone a terrific contraband purge in which I lost nearly every zine to my name, every tape, everything having to do with *Obscene Emission* and *Wiener Society*, including all art and words you've contributed.

I'm fucking crushed. My poor little artist heart broke. Oh, and my radio is gone. So... I'm reduced to Ground Zero. *Wiener Society* and *Obscene Emission* are not over, but set back. Thanks for all the kind words sent to me about *Wiener Society* #7.

Healthwise I'm fine.

Anyway, stay free—Neil

MRR—

I am tired of reading complaints about bands being racist or homophobic or sexist. Therefore, as part of my philanthropic, community outreach program, I propose a solution.

Bands—in order that we may avoid wasting time complaining about lyrics we disagree with, please, when writing new lyrics, avoid any potentially offensive topics. So no more lyrics dealing with sex, religion or race. And, also, please don't write lyrics about political issues, because politics offends me. And no pro-war lyrics because that offends anti-war people. And no anti-war lyrics

because that offends pro-war people. And no lyrics about personal life issues, because that might be offensive to people with no lives. And please no pro-violence lyrics, because that might offend pacifists, and no pacifist lyrics because that would offend violent people.

Breaking all this down might take a while, so I tell you what. From now on, instead of lyrics, could y'all please just hum along with the music? After all, we wouldn't want to offend anyone!

Please write me—I'm bored!

Shannon Parker #1159797
Box 9000 Henderson
TX 75653-9000
loveisnotaweakness@mail.com

Arwen—

This is Brian, hope this reaches you. I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciated the time and thought you obviously put into your column covering the last *Inside Front*—my god, a review like that is what a 'zine editor dreams of. It was level-headed, appreciative but also critical where necessary—you're absolutely right about the perspectives... it's a very specific viewpoint you get from the writers in *Inside Front*, even if they span multiple generations, continents, and classes, there's not a lot of talk about those differing experiences, it tends to be more the commonalities along the anarchist punk line that come out (and not only that, but a vast majority of the writing is indeed by people demographically more like myself than not.) That's not necessarily an objection to the work, but definitely something to keep in mind, and it's gotta become frustrating to anyone after a hundred-some pages of people coming from that one place. Also, poor Herds and Words, I fucking knew they were putting their feet in their mouths in that "sounding black" episode of the review, but I kept the recorder running because I thought it was better to approach that head-on than sweep it under the rug (for the sake of other bands that might benefit from seeing that in print and getting to think it over, for example).

Anyway, back to the review... I appreciated your subtle grasp of what we were trying to do, where it worked and where it didn't quite, and the humor too ("does that make me a skinhead?") What a wonderful thing, to know that at least one person in our community (and someone whose work I respect a lot, no less) actually read and even profitted from that project, since I put so much work into it! So thank you, thank you for taking so much trouble to do that. I guess those are the bookends of a classic career in punk journalism—from getting my second submission to *MRR* rejected and our prospective column canceled (Tim Yo told me I was a fascist, no less!) to getting one of the most in-depth reviews the magazine has ever given a 'zine. No, I'm not retiring, of course—as you mention in the review, I'm still ready to go—but it is funny.

That's all, just wanted to share my appreciation with you. Hope this reaches you, as I've misplaced your own address.

Yours, Brian

CrimethInc. Worker's Collective
crimethinc@yahoo.com

MRR—

I thought the articles you did on a lot of the old British UK peace punk bands were awesome, the bands were hard to find and their stories were great. I read the one with The Mob and went and got their album on Broken Rekids and its really great. I was just wondering if you were going to do anything more like that. Like maybe on bands from Japan and or Sweden. I'm starting to get into Japanese hardcore, but it is hard to find the records and info on these bands. I think some good articles on these bands would help shine some light. Thanks for putting out the best punk zine ever.

Peace—Justin / Chicago

justin.scanlon@ets.exel.com

Hey Justin. I enjoyed those articles too. They were researched and written by Lance Hahn, who is purportedly working on a book about UK peace punk. I think it would be great to see more chapters in the pages of MRR *soon. Got that, Lance? As far as articles about other old international (or American) punk scenes, we encourage obscenely knowledgeable punk rock dorks to send them our way.*

—Arwen

Dear *MRR*/Pat The *FNS* Guy—

I've been reading *MRR* for something like seven years and I've never felt the urge to write, but after reading that ill-conceived Massachusetts scene report in #243, I couldn't help it. Pat, were you trying to intentionally overlook bands that kids actually come out to see? There's been at least a show a week at the Central Square Elks for the past few months, and if you are who I think you are, I've seen you there. Why did you not mention this in favor of 21+ shows at The Choppin' Block that probably bring out fifteen people? And why resort to talking about New Hampshire bands? I personally think a Massachusetts scene report would be "grossly incomplete" without actually talking about bands from this state. I'm not going to list names here, but I can think of a generous handful of "hardcore" bands who consistently play shows, who tour, who put out records, and who get kids to come out to see them. I could be wrong here, but I doubt half the bands you mentioned have ever even played out of state. What's the point in writing about them in a national zine?

You also might want to pay a little bit more attention to details if you're going to have an article committed to print. Worcester is an hour from Boston, the A-Team's LP is on Stab and Kill, and their new 7" is on Boston's Painkiller Records, the first one was on Heroin(e). Since you flubbed those simple details, who's to know that your whole report isn't ridden with errors? And since you're probably the only person who likes the majority of the bands you mentioned, any other mistakes are going to be your little secret, because no one is going to care enough to correct you. And Jeez, if you're going to talk about current, vital bands opening your report with a Toxic Narcotic update is certainly getting off on the wrong foot.

Matt Smith
Worcester, MA

To the zine review crew—

I'm writing to address the reviews for my zine, *Dunk and Piss*. They appeared in the August, 2003 issue of *MRR*. The reviews themselves were favorable and I am grateful for that.

However, I have to comment on Sara Double-Ears' quote at the end: "Hey Alex, seriously though, lay off the judgmental statements in regards to people's body types—'fat' or 'obese' for description, but not as identification. Come on; you're creative."

I had a couple of reasons for calling the lady fat. If you had read the story in my zine, this particular character was something of an asshole and I felt no need to spare any sensitivity for her, like calling her "portly" or something. She wasn't all too deserving of my "creativity," such as it is. Secondly, her being fat wasn't an illegitimate or slanderous classification, as if she were an average-sized woman. She was very fat, and my job as a writer is to use certain tactics, i.e. bluntness, to paint an accurate and realistic portrayal of my situations. I appreciate the reviews, but when I read that last sen-

tence, I honestly felt like I was getting a teacher conference from middle school or something. Don't be so condescending.

One more problem I have with the same issue. My friend, Chris, sent his zine, *God Kwit*, in for review. It was reviewed by Jeff Heermann. In his review, he wrote the following: "...I've had some truck with this guy's previous efforts (*Drunk and Piss* 'zine, that is) and recognize 'em a mile away. Pissed teen rants, mainly." There're two very wrong parts to that statement.

1) I didn't write *God Kwit*. Chris did. You robbed him of his credit. He made the zine and you said that someone else did.

2) The name of my zine is *Dunk and Piss*, not "*Drunk and Piss*."

If he could recognize it a mile away, why did he think that I wrote it? Furthermore, if he's so recognizant of my efforts, why did he get the name of my zine wrong? These aren't minor mistakes of petty details; they're substantial errors. Exercise more caution while reviewing your zines, huh?

Otherwise, keep up the good work.

Alex
Dunk and Piss
11 Alger Dr.
Rochester, NY 14624

Dear *MRR*—
In your review of the Black Box demo in Oct. you put the wrong address.
The right address is 1936 Sonoma Ave Santa Rosa, CA 95405
Thanks —Jon

Dear *MRR* and Readers,
Once again I see that the zine *Alternative Press Review* has received a review in *MRR*, (this time in issue #244), and once again I am compelled to write a letter of warning.

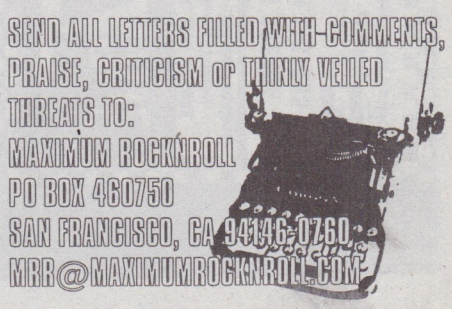
On March 18, 2002, I sent $32 to A.A.L./*Alternative Press Review* (not CAL, which is not related to these assholes) for a subscription using the subscription card included with an issue I received by the way of AK Press. According to this latest review, the address is still the same as it was back then. I have never received a single issue of this magazine, nor have I received a refund of my money. I sent letters on 06/12/002 and 10/06/03 asking about my subscription and requesting a refund of my money. I've contacted the Better Business Bureau and my state's Attorney General's Office of Consumer Protection. The Consumer Protection folks sent two letters n my behalf and never received any response either. A year and a half later I just have to assume that the people behind A.A.L/*Alternative Press Review* are scam artists posing as progressives simply to profit from folks who are already at a disadvantage. Send money at your own risk to these fucks.
Thank you and have a nice day! Peace, love, anarchy.
James Duane #214699
Macomb Correctional Facility
34625 26 Mile Road
New Haven, MI 48048.

MRR—
Hey. I'm Will and am 17. I keep looking at the old *MRR* covers (on the website) and wondering what were they like and everything, since I'm not old enough to have expierenced punk in the early 80s or looked at any *MRRs* from that time. Would you guys ever consider releaseing old *MRRs*? I was just thinking about this and there might be more people out there that feel the same way? Maybe??
Will

Dear Will—
Well let me just tell you, the old issues are pretty awesome. Unfortunately, we can't just "release" them—we'd have to reprint them, and if we had the money for that, honestly, it would got to newer projects. We do archive the zine, minimally, but we never, like, save a bunch of copies for posterity. Once an issue is gone—and this was especially true in the old days—it's gone. All the originals are thrown away, and we start over again. These days, we save enough of the ingredients electronically to reconstruct an issue if we wanted to, but why would we want to? You can find old issues, sometimes, in record or bookstores (I saw a bunch recently at Armageddon Shop in Providence), or online if you're into that sort of thing. Maybe what you really need is a mentor—an older punk with a bunch of old MRRs *and a badass record collection. Anyway, best of luck.*
—Arwen

Hi *MRR*—
I was writing to tell you guys how much I love your zine, and how great you guys have done in making this mag great again (except for the bands you choose for the covers), but anyway. I have a question, how do you pick the record reviewers? Can I be one? Do you need any knowledge of the kind of music you review? In the last issue I read (Sept. '03) I noticed a few errors in your record reviews. Most notably the review for the War Collapse 7"—the reviewer compares the band to Amebix and Anti Sect, while in fact this is a covers 7". The songs are three covers—Amebix, "Beginning of the End," Anti Sect, "In Darkness..." and Discharge, "The Blood Runs Red." This may seem silly, and it is, but many kids who read your mag depend on your reviews to help them learn about this kind of stuff. Especially in this, the day of one million punk bands. I would understand if the covers were of obscure shit, but come on, Anti Sect? Amebix? Fucking Discharge?! What the fuck! There are many of us out there who would love to have the privilege of reviewing for *MRR*. You guys are, like it or not, analyzed, dissected, and respected by the whole world. The reviewers are respected and must know what they are talking about. So that brings me back to my original question, how does one become a reviewer?
Andres Nicol
fannyofay@yahoo.com

Andreas-
First off thanks for writing and correcting us on the War Collapse EP. Arwen and I try to catch mistakes like this, but sometimes things like this slip through. As far as becoming a reviewer goes, first off all reviewers must live in the Bay Area, after that we have an interview process with new reviewers in order to discern what they are into, what they know about, what they don't know about, etc. Once we have chatted with the prospective reviewer a few times and feel they can do the job, they are hired on. Simple. Mistakes will occur from time to time, especially given the volume and range of records that we cover. Still, I feel that, despite some mistakes that reviewers will make from time to time (even glaring ones like the one you point out), the review staff is doing a fairly great job at describing, and rating the records that we cover each month. Thanks again for writing, and for the correction.
—Michael Thorn



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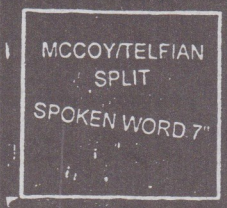

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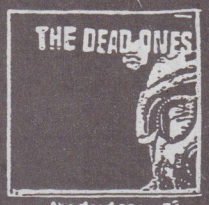

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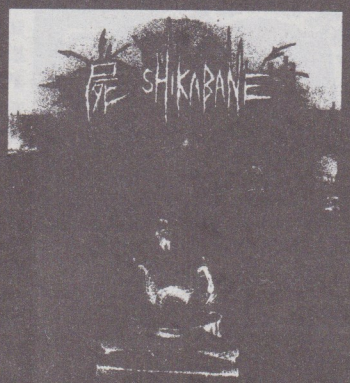

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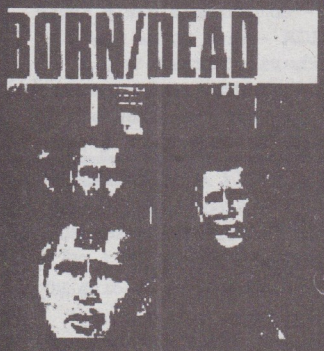

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IRON LUNG - 2 man brutality

FACE OF CHANGE- Sapporo HC
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COLUMNS

Damien Echols' face had changed in predictable ways since the HBO documentary *Paradise Lost* had made him something of a rock star; his eyes were dark and deeply set, understandably sad but not without something of a patience. Gone was his Oscar Wilde trial haircut; instead his close-shorn hair, still naturally ink black, framed an intense, hopeful expression. I suppose six years in jail for a crime that not only you did not commit, but that no reasonable evidence has surfaced to even place you in proximity of, can do that.

During the course of the interviews filmed from prison, I was so taken into Echols' mannerisms, his southern pace, and his gentleness. He reminded me of someone close; and then I remembered that he looks and speaks like David used to. David was my best friend growing up in Shithole, Alabama. He was tough and distant and quiet. He had the requisite divorced parents and the subsequent uber freedom of living with a single father, which got us both into a fair amount of trouble. From being the only skaters at our tiny school in 3rd grade, to getting into metal and then punk a couple of years later, to learning to steal tapes from the mall in middle school, we were tight. We were also heading down what is popularly referred to as the *wrong path.*

And the wrong path was good to us in the untouchable days of adolescent petty crime. Our main thing was skating and finding out about new bands in *Thrasher*, but we were also into knives, learning to smoke, getting attention through dressing like the punks we saw in photographs, and daydreaming about what life would be like once we got the fuck out of Shithole Alabama. Even Atlanta sounded great, and truthfully, Atlanta kinda sucks. My grades were good enough that teachers outright told me that they were keeping David in my classes so I could help him out. By the time we got into 7th grade, school board policy dictated that the promising kids separate from the planned refuse. Not a week went by where I wasn't cornered by a teacher or administrator and given the speech about how well I could be doing and how much potential I might have if it just weren't for the people I hung out with. I would sit silently and nod, trail away, and in my head scream *Fuck You You Have NO Idea What Anyone Here is About And I Hate You For What You Do To Kids!!!* Sure enough, by the time high school rolled around, crystal meth was gaining popularity in the south due to its accessibility and low, low price. For the same reasons, guns started showing up.

Because it was high school, there were more freak kids from all over the county (a lot, like ten), and with a bona fide social circle and increasingly uniform disdain for, well, everything, the backlash was prompt and brutal. In my first year of high school I learned I was white trash, a fag, a *Satanist,** and probably even a nigger lover. I found that if I were to make it to the game this weekend, or even go into the woods across from my own house, my head would be shaved and my ass would be kicked. As we all did at that point, I decided that David, and Jade and Shannon and Nick and Morrow and Christina were my friends and I hated every other person. Enter insular pretension, black and white logic, Platonic dualism for dummies.

Fast forward through six months of one suicide threat, two guns pulled in school, two overdoses, and learning about the small time drug trade. Due to Circumstances Beyond Our Control, my family left Shithole and moved far away. It sucked. But when I went back to visit a year later, I realized I had been yanked from the path of an ugly squall. All my friends were gone—jail, rehab, reform school. A fucking mental health facility. The county wanted to try David as an adult (at age 17) for possession of two joints at school. There was no way to see him.

Fast forward three years through my first real band, learning about zines (not just *comics!*), "straightedge," watching Riot Grrl happen, learning to channel anger; I was back in Shithole for a wedding. Feeling distanced by a hundred years and two languages and a time zone, I looked David up. He was kicking around, living with his grandparents, doing not a lot, it seemed. He was in between trials and, since no school in the county would let him back in, stressing to get a GED. In a way, I felt like the administrators who used to play us against each other had won; but it was just fortune. That's it. But still David was intense. In a different setting, he would've been someone that people looked up to. *I* couldn't help but look up to him. He was just born that way: tough, defiant, and just scared enough to stay human.

It's difficult to write too much about a childhood spent out of step. It always borders on cliché; typical and familiar as love stories within our subculture. Similarly unfortunate and presumably unsurprising are stories of unjust conviction. The West Memphis 3 case, however, has hit so close to home for so many people (and who knows why HBO got involved, but they did, and the documentary is impossible to ignore) that once the facts are in your face, it feels like breathing through a burlap sack in the trunk of a speeding car.

Paradise Lost 2: Revelations, the second film produced by HBO, which chronicles the plight of Damien Echols, Jason Baldwin, and Jessie Misskelly—left me absolutely winded. If you're not familiar with the case, which is admittedly the cause du jour for everyone from Wynona Ryder to Little Rock's favorite metal band Tem Eyos Ki[1] (and for good reason), three teenagers have been locked up[2] for the grizzly (really, *really* grizzly) murders of three small children with no physical evidence and the coerced confession of a 14-year-old with an IQ 0f 75, all because metal kids are great scapegoats...well, that is cause for attention. This column isn't the place for the details, but it doesn't need to be, because the case is well documented to the minutest details. So please, for all your ghosts and childhoods and senses of justice and any *last scrap* of hope you have left for habeas corpus and any of the good things about this country, check the case out, please:

www.wm3.org is the definitive starting point for those with computer access. It's the site for Free the West Memphis Three, and has *so much* information. It's faithfully updated with appeal reports and developments.

Paradise Lost: The Child Murders of Robin Hood Hills and *Paradise Lost 2: Revelations* by Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinotsky, are both

excellent references. Especially the second one, which delves into the mounting evidence against Mark Byers, the rabid ultra-Christian stepfather of one of the murder victims.
The Devil's Knot, by Mara Leveritt, an Arkansas journalist, is also a great book about the case.

If you know about the case already and want to get in touch with any of the three men (and writing to prisoners is good across the board, remember!), here's the info:
Jason Baldwin #103335, PO Box 600, Grady, AR. 71644-0600
Jason Misskelley Jr. #103072, PO Box 600, Grady, AR 71644-0600
Damien Echols #SK 931, Varner unit, PO Box 400, Grady, AR 71644 (the SK in his number is for "safe keeping"; the Varner unit is a "supermax" prison. Super Maximum security; all solitary, all the time).

If you wanna write me: PO Box 28226, Providence RI 02908. I'm not in jail.
*And here I would like to personally thank the teachers who felt it necessary to call both David's and my home to have a warm, well-meaning heart to heart with our parents about our interest in and probable devotion to Satan *and* suicide. The Dark One even got his own week-long human interest series in the local paper concerning his popularity with the young folks!
[1] This month *Cruel and Unusual: An Exhibition to Benefit the West Memphis Three* is being held at Los Angeles' SIXSPACE Gallery with Jello Biafra, Glenn E. Friedman, Exene, Raymond Pettibon, The Hernandez Brothers and a whole lotta other people. Winona Ryder is hosting it and 100% of the proceeds go the WM3 legal fund.
[2] Death row, life, and forty years, respectively.

Travel is not a vacation, and it is often the opposite of a rest. —Paul Theroux

I was madder than a constipated scat-lover. We're having a farewell celebration. One of the teachers is going to Vietnam to do his doctorate. The headmaster throws a party. Wine, sandwiches, farewell...a half hour. And what? We've got to work an extra half hour to make up for it. Is that fair?

JEZUS FUCKIN... What the fuck? The lights flicker and go out. Fans, air conditioner. I'm caught mid-complaint. Cellphones kaput. Nothing.

TERRORISTS! They hit us again. How long before the explosions start? Our oriental electronics expert hooks his cellphone into the computer's back-up power supply. Some kind of boost. He calls Washington: Department of Homeland Security.

"Power is down all over the Northeast," he tells us. "A few cities in the Mid-west. Canada too. The department knows nothing else. This isn't terrorists, they say... or it's very clever terrorists."

Ah well, it's only a mile and a half back home. I can walk. I might as well see if any bars are open. There are five of us: three teachers, and a couple of students. We're off. The closest bar is sweltering, but sweltering I can put up with.

"The only cold beer," says the bartender, "is Budweiser."

Can I put up with that? Drinking Budweiser to get out of a heat wave. That's like cutting off your balls to get out of too-tight underpants. The solution will work, but is it worth it?

In a desperate attempt at rationalization, I think, "well, at least it's not Coors Lite." And I order the first round.

Several rounds later, we stagger out of the closing bar. Two hours later, I make it home after pissing on 16th Street. My stricture blacked out like the city.

Hmmmm, it's gonna be tough to tie this blackout intro to the main part of this column, but I can't leave you hanging. I promised, and you shall receive: Part 2... THE BULGARIA ADVENTURE.

When last I left you, I had just reached Sofia.

Sofia, a hot dusty town with onion-tower churches, wide streets, and black air. No one seems to like the town. It's just where people are... to earn money. In Sofia you can make a bundle. $150 a week, if you try.

I've just moved into the Sofia punk commune. I introduced you to some of my roommates: VENDETTA singer, Shutta (pronounced SHOO-TAH), Sasho, the funny guy, and Sesi, the quiet one. Besides these, there is Beni, Sasho's girlfriend and the biggest moneymaker of the crew. There's also Spiro, the cat, Shar-Pei, the washing machine, and THE SEX PIG.

There are few enough apartments with their own washing machines. Fewer still are washing machines with a name.

"See, we'd been saving for awhile," Sasho explains, inhaling some homegrown herb. "We had enough money to either buy a Shar-Pei... you know one of those wrinkled dogs from China..."

He exhales.

"Or," he continues, "we could get a washing machine. I figured you don't have to walk a washing machine, but Beni wanted the dog. So we compromised."

"You got a washing machine and you *named* it Shar-Pei, like the dog," I say.

"For an American," he says, taking another toke, "you're not so dumb."

Sasho gives me a brief balcony tour of the new crop of five-leafed plants.

"I work so hard on those plants," he tells me. "They're my children. I care for them, talk to them, nourish them, give them milk from my breasts..."

Hmmmm, Bulgarians are a *lot* different.

I beg off trying the latest harvest. Due to a weak lung, and a tendency to overeat when stoned, I'm not a weed-toker. Alcohol is my drug, and it is not one ignored in Bulgaria. Next to the newspaper, on which the last batch of homegrown goodies is drying, is a bottle of rakia. That's Bulgarian grape vodka. Super hardcore. Excuse me while I indulge... aaaah... now where was I.., oh yeah, the introductions.

The best introduction to SpirotheCat comes the next morning about 6 am. A scream, like something from a horror movie, awakens me from my rakia-stupor. Twice it happens. I recognize Sasho's voice.

"My babies! My babies!" he cries. "They're all dead. My babies are dead."

SpirotheCat ate his plants.

"Where is he? Where is he? I'll kill him!" Sasho's muffled voice comes from the balcony.

The cat is on the kitchen counter, lunging at an imaginary something or other near the window. BLAM! He's on the curtains, clawing his way up, tearing great holes as he climbs. BLAM! Sasho enters the room, fists clenched, mouth taut.

I'm about to witness Spirocide. Sasho whirls on his heels, banging the kitchen counter, throwing aside magazines, last night's empty bottles, and half a dozen roaches. The cat hangs in fear from the top of the curtains. Sasho looks under "my" couch. Under the table. There is murder in his eyes. I struggle to avoid looking at the cat.

Fast-forward 12 hours: The cat still lives. We sit around the table having some Fast Burger chicken sandwiches, discussing hardcore and punk rock. Alex from LAST HOPE has joined us.

After the expected where-were-you-during-the-World-Trade-Center attack questions, comes the really important stuff.

"So you really know AGNOSTIC FRONT?" says Alex. "I

mean you say hello to the guys?"

"I met Roger in Florida," I tell him. "ARTLESS's first LP had just come out. I was at some punk concert. Roger was there. I showed him the LP and he figured out who I was. He says, 'A lot of people don't like you.' I agree. He laughs. 'A lot of people don't like me either,' he says."

"What about Vinny Stigma? You ever see him?" asks Alex, enthralled. It's like he's speaking to someone who fucked the Pope.

"Sure," I tell him, "he used to work the door at THE CONTINENTAL. Now he's got a tattoo parlor with Jimmy Gestapo."

"You mean MURPHY'S LAW? You know them too?"

"Sure," I don't say, "I got a blow job from every one of 'em."

I cannot tell a lie... well, that's a lie. In this case, I *do* not tell a lie.

"Nope," I tell him, "I've seen 'em around, been to shows, but I don't know the guys personally. They wouldn't know me from Mike Bloomberg."

"Who's Mike Bloomberg?" asks Alex. "Wasn't he in WARZONE?"

Somehow talk gets around to THE BAD BRAINS. It always does.

"You know THE BAD BRAINS??" ask Shutta.

"Sure," I say. "Much to his regret, Dr. Know produced the first ARTLESS album."

"What's an album?" asks Sasho.

"A flat black piece of vinyl..." I start to answer. He breaks into a smile.

"I was only kidding," he says. "Despite 500 years of being held in slavery by the Turks, I know what an album is."

"Slavery by Turks?" I ask, "What's that got to do with..."

"It's everything!" says Shutta. "How would you like to spend 500 years of your life being a servant... on your own land?"

We're all completely soused by this time. Though I am sober enough to appreciated Shutta's amazing physical condition after 500 years of slavery.

Slavery is soon forgotten though, replaced by THE SEX PIG.

"Shutta has a girlfriend," Sasho tells me. "She's an au pair in Massachusetts."

"An au pair?" I ask. "Does she wear one of those white aprons and little hats and give blow jobs to Ron Jeremy?"

Shutta puts his head hands in his hands. "No no no." he says. "She makes people's beds and gets lots of money for it. That's all."

"Must be rough for you," I say.

Sasho answers, "Rough? It could be rough, but Shutta's got THE SEX PIG."

He runs into another room and returns with a blow-up doll. Not the kind you have in your dresser drawer. Not the girl in the wig with REAL CURLS. This one is a pig. I don't mean a human pig. I mean an oink oinker. A black and white blow up pig. With a hole just under the tail.

"We got it in a sex shop," said Sasho. "It was Shutta's going away present."

"But he didn't go away," I say.

"Yeah," answers Sasho, "but his girlfriend did. What's he supposed to do without THE SEX PIG?"

I guess that's what comes from 500 years of being enslaved by the Turks. What can I say?

We spend the rest of the night in drunken revelry, talking about BAD BRAINS and AGNOSTIC FRONT.

In fact, we spend most of the next week in drunken revelry talking about BAD BRAINS and AGNOSTIC FRONT.

In the days that follow, Beni is off earning a living. Sasho and Shutta both work in an expensive coffee shop. The owner is "a Jew" they tell me. That means he has lots of money.

[Aside: it's amazing I still hear this "Jews and money" thing. Even my Japanese students tell me how great Jews are for handling money and how they control the world's finances. What I want to know is: WHERE'S MY CUT??? There are billions of dollars involved. My fellow tribesmen can throw me a million or so. Right? I should ask Mike Bloomberg.]

Despite heavy work schedules, the boys always make sure someone is with me. They're my Bulgarian guardian angels, caring for me during my few hours of sobriety. Who knows? I might get lost. Get taken. Get mugged. I may be left alone. What will I do? How will I survive? I can't speak the language. I don't know the way to the commune. Something might happen.

All day either Sasho or Shutta guards me while the other works. They treat me like royalty. They're my tour guides, benefactors, protectors. Amazing instant friendship with nothing in common but AGNOSTIC FRONT... and BAD BRAINS and booze.

Today is the day before I'm off to the East Coast—by the Black Sea. It's drizzling. A bleak nasty day. Shutta has to leave me for awhile. For my protection, he brings me to the punk cafe, an inside-outside bar. His friends are there and will look after me. There are a few girls, and the drummer of his band. He reminds me that we're gonna meet up later by the booksellers, near the statues of the old people sitting on a bench.

He says good-bye, looking worried. I walk over and sit down at the table where his friends are. An umbrella almost protects us from the drizzle.

At that table, I see THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL IN THE WORLD. She sits with the drummer and two other attractive girls. One is a skinny bouncy blond wearing a short dress and two perky breasts. The other is slightly heftier with a kind of healthy Midwest white bread American look. But THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL IN THE WORLD... my fuckin' God.

Her nose has a forceful Semitic curve, giving it a fiercely eager look.

"Let me discipline you," says that nose.

"Please! Do it now!" say my glands.

Her dark eyes are set back beneath perfectly black brows. They'd make a Goth black with envy. And the lips, ah those lips, thick and supple like perfect delicious slugs joined at each end. She wears a black tube top that hugs her body like I'd like to, following every ripple of her taut stomach, rounding gently upward, cupping her double soupbowl breasts.

Her legs, long and strong, at first rest above her heels on the edge of her chair. Then they uncoil, serpentine, like a boa ready to strangle. Strangle me, please!

You can't talk to someone who looks like that. What can you say? You only stare, goonlike—or talk to someone sitting near her, hoping that she'll join in the conversation. The difficulty of this in Bulgaria is that the people will speak Bulgarian.

"So," I say, using my most brilliant conversation starter, "anybody plan to come to New York? You can stay at my place."

Right then, the drizzle intensifies. My question ignored, their Bulgarian turns to laughter. The blonde gestures in story-telling mode, bringing her arms up ballerina-style, then moving them down her legs and shaking her shoulders. The girls laugh. I smile. The rain becomes a downpour and the girls go into the bar. They don't invite me.

For the rest of the day, I think about THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL IN THE WORLD. Those legs. Those lips. My God, I'm going to melt. Turn into Jell-o. I'll dribble into fluid. Right there onto the sidewalks of Sofia.

Her image presses itself inside my pants, throbbing against my thigh. I adjust myself. It doesn't help.

The rest of the day is a quiet blur of that girl. Those lips, the way she uncoiled her legs, the breasts enslaved for 500 years by her tight tube top, waiting for my hands to liberate them. My prostate aches in unfulfillment.

Later, I meet up with Shutta and go out for dinner. The food in Bulgaria is not all that varied, but it is good. Tomatoes have a taste. Cucumbers too. Genetic-manipulation, pesticides, and modern harvest methods have not yet come to this country. What a palatal joy!

After dinner, we go back to the commune. We listen to CDs, drink more beer and rakia, and one by one, go off to sleep. Because I'm crashing on the living room couch, I'm the last to get to sleep. As it gets later, through the swirling alcohol, come mental pictures of THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL IN THE WORLD. No matter what I'm talking about, I think about her. Sasho is the last to leave the room.

"Can I get you anything before you go to sleep?" he asks.

"Yeah," I say. "Bring me THE PIG."

****

From Sofia, it's off to Varna on the Black Sea. A cross-country train trip through fields and fields of ragweed. By the time I arrive, the burning of my eyes is only surpassed by the flow of snot from my nose.

But the Black Sea coast washes my eyes and clears my nose. What a town! In contrast to the dusty wide streets of Sofia, Varna is a lungful of fresh air.

It's a beautiful town, showing remnants of its Greek heritage, with enough green to satisfy both Tom Cruise *and* Paul Newman. There are white sand beaches, and exposed beauties, waiting for my eyes to devour them.

Though I'll travel anywhere, there are few places I'd actually live: São Paulo, Copenhagen, Chaing Mai. To that short list I now add Varna, Bulgaria.

Most of the punkrockers here work in the tourist biz. They're clean-cut. They wear tattoo-covering clothes. It's no problem at all to deal with the Europeans who come here to "the cheap Riviera."

During the day, there is the beach and booze. At night, I jump into the universal punk rock activity: hanging out.

In Varna, the hangout is a large park in the center of town. At one end of the park is a tourist cafe. The other end opens into a series of walking streets with cafes, fast food joints and hotels.

Between these two ends are a series of barely lit twisty little paths through the greenery. It is on one of these paths that I now squat. Squatting around me are Jivko, my host and guitar player of INDIGNITY, other local punks, and Nadia, the cool, funny, sexy girlfriend of the lead singer of Jivko's band. He says goodbye.

[Aside: In Bulgaria, the girls have it all over the boys. The boys are friendly, funny, and cool, but not the best lookers in the world. The girls are incredible. Their only problem: they have three arms. One is attached to their right shoulder. Another is attached to their left shoulder. The third is attached to their boyfriends! Ouch!]

We sit, drinking beer in the park, hanging out, enjoying the weather, the passersby, lamenting the fact that commercial interests turn true Bulgarian music into light pop with barely risque lyrics. Then they sell it to the tourists as "authentic."

In the background, from the in-the-park cafe, comes Bulgarian-flavored light pop.

"So, did you see the World Trade Center crash?" asks Jivko. "What was it like? All those people jumping and the buildings burning."

"I know what burning jet fuel smells like," I tell him.

"What?" he asks.

I'm stumped. How do you describe a smell that doesn't smell like anything else? Hmmm, maybe it's time to start talking about AGNOSTIC FRONT.

Instead, I'm saved by the drummer of Jivko's band. He's a big guy with a full black beard. He sits on the ground with a beer in one hand and a plastic cup full of rakia in the other. When he speaks to me, he looks directly at the rakia, as if addressing it, rather than me.

"Mykel," he says, "you know what *adash* [pronounced ah-DAHSH] is?"

"Nope," I answer. "Pass the beer."

He hands me the beer, but continues talking to the spot where the bottle was.

"An adash is someone with the same name," he explains, "in the same place."

"I don't get it," I tell him.

He speaks in ellipses.

"It's Bulgarian... maybe from Turkey... We were enslaved by Turkey for 500 years...You know that?"

"So I've heard," I tell him.

"So the word comes from that....it's like if there are two people together in the same place...and they have the same name...they have a special relationship... not just two people...you know what I mean?"

"That's an adash?" I say, drawing my ergo sum.

He nods.

"You are my adash," he tells me. "I am Mikhail...that's like Michael...only a different language...so you are my adash."

He reaches up to shake my hand, for the first time looking directly at me.

"You and me..." he says, "you and me...we understand...adash...You and me...we both know...THE BAD BRAINS...and love and respect and Jah...adash...we know."

My adash is infatuated with THE BAD BRAINS. So's Jivko's bass player, one of the few smooth-faced young men I've seen in Bulgaria.

And AGNOSTIC FRONT! They yell at me, "Don't forget AGNOSTIC FRONT!"

The conversation continues. Both the drummer and the bass player will write letters to THE BAD BRAINS. I should hand deliver them. The bass player promises his undying love and devotion in exchange for a guitar pick actually picked by Gary "Dr. Know."

"I'll do my best," I tell him.

Time passes quickly here. It's amazing, because I don't do anything. Well, there's the MTV adventure. But it's not much.

Bulgarian MTV is gonna film INDIGNITY and two other bands.

"They're on an *alternatives* kick," Jivko tells me. "They're trying to show underground bands. I don't know, maybe they think it'll sell more yogurt."

"Why are you going to be on it?" I ask in all my musical correctness.

"Mykel," he answers, "this is a small country. We are a small band. We can stay in Varna and work for the tourists and play to no one once every three months...or...maybe we can do something, and let people hear what we have to say."

I feel like shit, questioning his one chance to get outside his tiny town. I'm here as a tourist. I can leave and go home to my fallen World Trade towers. Jivko, how many chances does he have?

The next day, MTV whirls into the rehearsal room, takes a few shots of the band playing, asks a few questions, then takes off. No, I'm not on Bulgarian MTV...they don't even ask.

Yeah, MTV is as alternative as Van Halen, even in Bulgaria. But I hope, at least, the exposure lets the boys get out of Varna.

Reluctantly, I have to leave Varna. My trip is coming to an end and I still have two more cities to visit. One is the beautiful tourist trap, Necebar. The other is the central ragweed capital of Stara Zagora.

In Necebar, I'm taken for ten bucks in a seafood clipjoint. What's a trip without being taken? Then, I'm off to Stara Zagora. Ivailo (pronounced e-VILE-low) Tonchev awaits me. We've been emailing each other in New York. He has a distribution service connected with lots of bands. He re-releases unavailable

Bulgarian punk classics on CD-ROM. He sent me a bunch for *MRR* to review, but I don't think they review CD-ROMs. You can get some for yourself, though. Email Ivailo at: lavrentiiberia@dir.bg and ask. He loves trades.

Ivailo meets me at the train station in Stara Zagora. The only guy I've met this trip who's over thirty, Ivailo tells me that he, too, is an English teacher. Unlike mine, his wards are *not* Japanese businessmen, but technical high school kids. I'm the invited guest.

Flash ahead to the school day. We go to an old building with chalkboards that won't hold chalk. About 25 kids sit in class. A couple of girls file their nails in the back. Most of the students are boys. Some of them pull their chairs up front to get a good look at a real live American. Others sit in the back with the girls. A few set fire to tiny balls of paper which they throw at the guys in front.

"This is Mykel Board," says Ivailo. "He's an American. You can ask him anything you want."

An attractive young man, with an attractive young woman sitting on his lap is the first to speak. [Aside: have things changed since I was in high school... or is this just Bulgaria? I don't remember ever sitting in a high school class with another person—of any gender—on my lap.]

"Do American students have guns?" asks the boy.

"Everybody in America has guns," I tell him. "I personally have half a dozen Colt 45s and an AK47."

"That's not what I mean," says the student. "I don't mean bang-bang guns. We know every American has those. I mean gun guns. Like for exams."

I look at Ivailo. He lets me hang a few seconds before explaining.

"Guns are what you use to cheat on exams," he finally tells me. "You know, a piece of paper with the answers on it that you hide in a book or rolled up in a pen."

"Like this," says the boy, unscrewing his pen and pulling a long strip of paper from inside.

"Oh no," I say with a completely straight face. "America is a technologically advanced country. We wear glasses with tiny cameras in them. These broadcast to an outside computer where our friends see the exam, look up the answers, then transmit them through a microphone to a tiny earpiece in the part of the glasses that hooks over your ear."

Naturally enough, he doesn't get it.

Ivailo translates.

The student's eyes widen. He looks around at the others. One boy, wearing old-fashioned commie-style wire-rimmed glasses, takes off those glasses and examines them for a likely place to put a camera and earphone.

Not everyone is interested though. Three or four students get up and leave the room. The fiery paper fight escalates. Flaming missiles pass overhead and land on desks, on the floor, on other students. One lands in Ivailo's lap. He brushes it off and steps on it, like a roach.

"They're on their best behavior," says Ivailo. "You should see them when we don't have a guest."

There's more, but again we've run out of newsprint. I'll finish up next week... if I have lights and electricity. Deregulate my ass.

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

-->*You gotta love the Scandinavians dept:*

I found this AP story stuck in the bowels of my computer. I think Ted sent it to me.

On March 10 of this year the Norwegian band, Mayhem, had a concert in their native land. At that concert, a flying sheep's head hit a fan and fractured his skull. The fan's skull, not the sheep's.

The band was carving up a dead sheep as part of its stage act. The animal's head flew off the lead singer's knife and struck Per Kristian Hagen.

Hagen filed "involuntary assault and battery" charges against the band. The charges carry a maximum sentence of six months in prison.

Mayhem member Rune Eriksen, whose stage name is Blasphemer, said the incident was "unfortunate."

"The whole thing was an accident, but maybe it would be an idea for another show," he said.

Eriksen promised Hagen a free ticket to the group's next performance.

-->*Whew! dept:* I'm sure Ted sent me this urgent link. If you've ever been worried about being abducted by an alien, end your worries now! Go to www.stopabductions.com and just follow the instructions.

-->*Last Hope dept:* Last month I gave you contact info for Shutta's VENDETTA and his label. This time I want to add something for Alex from LAST HOPE and Jivko from INDIGNITY. You should write to them at: info@lasthopehardcore.com and jivko@unitedandstrong.net.

Ask about trades and other stuff. Let's teach people that *world music* ain't just a buncha flutes—or pop music made from folk tunes.

-->*After all the nice things I said about them dept:* Seems like punkstock, planned for months in Varna, was cancelled by order of the mayor. After all that planning and publicity, the mayor thinks it'll be bad for the tourist business. At least for the kind of tourists they want. Can you say fat Germans and retired accountants?

A pal who organized the whole thing is so fed up he's moving out. Leaving the city and the country. Out of paradise. He wants to move to a country where the authorities don't close down punk shows. That should be easy, right?

Maybe I'm just being an asshole, but don't you think that anyone associated with that *Red Sonja* movie or that *Hit And Run* album probably shouldn't be seeking public office? "Abolish Government/Silent Majority"?????????????? What the fuck?????? Fuck all these action movies and old punk records. I'm gonna stick to following where the real politicians come from: wrestling and porno. OK...I'm through immersing myself in pop culture for the time being. Back to Loserville...record time!

First things first: THE DIRTBOMBS have a new album! I've been waiting nearly two fucking years since *Ultraglide In Black* (a.k.a. "The Album of The Century...Thus Far") to hear what they'd do next, so when this showed up in my mailbox, I was shocked, nervous, and a little bit tingly in the naughty region. Anyone with half a brain should know that you never get the same thing twice with this lot, which not only keeps things exciting, but also proves that this is a band at the top of their game...as well as everyone else's. Would it actually include some of the musical "threats" that Mick Collins suggested they were considering (he's alluded to cutting glam rock, bubblegum, and rap records)? In short, *yes*, and so much more! If *Horndog Fest* was their buzzy, noisy album, and *Ultraglide* was their fuzzed-out soul/R&B venture, than *Dangerous Magical Noise*, released on In The Red, falls somewhere in between. However, I certainly wouldn't say that they're any less adven-

turous or brilliant this time around. There's more than a fair nod to glam rock here, as one listen to "Motor City Baby" (tell me it's not T. REX run through The Dirtbombs' fuzz-filter) will illustrate. There are moments of absolute catchy infection ("Get It While You Can" and "Earthquake Heart"), ferociousness ("Stuck In Thee Garage") and everything in between. Simply put, a motherfucker of an album. Gonzo Rock is back!!!

Still breathless over The Dirtbombs' new platter, yet another scorcher recently arrived that has me going absolutely bonkers. I'm speaking, of course, of the mighty FM KNIVES' new single, "Keith Levene" b/w "Valentine" 7" on Dirtnap Records! Anyone who has paid any attention to anything I've said over the past year or two knows that I'm basically obsessed with their every move. I doubt this single will be that hard of a sell to those already acquainted with the band's previous outings, but it must be said that they continue to improve upon the sound that has driven every punky pop asshole batty since *Useless & Modern*'s release. Two tunes, packed with melody, smarts and booze...yum. For the dorks, 100 of these are on colored vinyl, but you should pick up any variation of this single immediately...not that you need any persuasion.

I've recently re-discovered the great COUNTRY TEASERS, who I had sort of lost touch with after their time on Crypt Records. However, their most recent In The Red releases, including their new album, *Secret Weapon Revealed At Last a.k.a. Full Moon Empty Sportsbag*, have made them my most recent obsession, which is very telling. No wonder I'm a social leper...I can't get enough Teasers! I think the new record might be their most deranged moment yet, which means we should all seek shelter immediately. What's not to love about post-punk roots music played by Scottish basket cases? Everything comes out so perfectly wrong that you can't help but dig it...or be horribly freaked out. If this is country music, count me in!

If you're one of those geeks that are thrilled by the hunt, allow me to introduce you to Sweden's Ken Rock Records. What's the big deal? Well, they happen to have a tiny little band on their roster by the name of HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE. Maybe you've heard of 'em? If you don't like this band, you're a fucking moron. Or you're dead. Either way, it sucks to be you. *I Was A Teenage Pretty Boy* is the name of their new 7"EP. Now go fucking buy one! Keeping up with the sound on their recent *Patmos Or Bust* 7" EP, HFOS seem to be going for a schizophrenic re-working of the DAMNED's early stuff, adding a little more melody to their madness. Works for me, I dig it all! On a related HFOS/Ken Rock note, there's also the *Smell My Ass* 7"EP by TOKYO KNIVES, featuring an HFOS dude and Martin from THE BLACKS.

Speaking of The Blacks, Zaxxon Virile Action has released what appears to be the band's 19th "last record ever." Seriously, folks, if I had a nickel for every time I wrote about this band's projected "last record ever," I'd probably have enough money to mail order this single...from Venus. Actually, I think Big Neck's *Shattered* 7"EP (which came out three years ago or something) was supposed to be their first "last record ever," but who knows? Fuck my yapping! I'm more than happy to add another single to my Blacks collection. When they do another "last record ever," you'll hear about it here!

I must admit that THE ZODIAC KILLERS had me worried. Since their last album, they've undergone numerous line-up changes and had to deal a steady stream of gigs gone awry. However, judging by their new album, the aptly titled *Society's Offenders*, they seem to have pulled through. I don't give a good goddamn what anyone says, this might be their finest outing yet! *Society's Offenders*, released on (duh) Rip Off Records, features 12 tunes that fall somewhere in between the sound their first album and Greg's INFECTIONS tunes (meaning things have slowed down a little and snotted up a lot). It even has a song about microwave dinners that *doesn't* totally blow! That right there is worth a round of applause by itself. They get bonus points (or stupid points, I can't decide) for the cover art, which is a "reenactment" of a Zodiac Killer crime scene. Offenders indeed!

Hot on the heels of that excellent FITTS single from last month, Big Neck Records drops two more 7" goodies our way. First off is the second 7" by THE PONYS from Chicago. "Wicked City" b/w "Little Friends" rocks a little harder than their *Contaminated* EP, but the post-punk vibe is still ever-present. Next up is a new single from Wisconsin's STRONG COME ONS, the *Yell A Lot And Suck* 7"EP. Culled from recordings that date back to the ice age, these guys definitely have that stompy and sloppy minimal garage racket down perfectly, coming off very aggressive and leaving no time to catch your breath.

Another month, another split 7"EP from Nice & Neat Records! This time we get THE HAVE-NOTS (from Japan) and THE SOVIETTES (from Minneapolis). What is there to say about The Have-Nots??? This band absolutely rules. Their two tunes featured here have a much deeper power-pop sound than I remember them having. That's not a complaint though, as this is far superior to the already-great previous outings. I was mildly impressed by The Soviettes' single from some months back (have yet to hear the album), but their tunes here are great (especially the tune they sing in Japanese!) Nice & Neat is doing all they can to dispel the "split 7"s suck" rumor floating around. They've certainly convinced me!

I'm a tad late reporting on THEE FLYING DUTCHMEN, but I simply had to wait until I had the goods in hand. Thankfully, that problem has been solved and I've stumbled upon two records that sound like lost recordings from South City, USA, "Budget Rock" style! However, the place is Washington and the time is *now*! Seriously, one listen to their *Live At Devil's Club* 7"EP or (better yet) their astounding *Caveman Sessions* LP will have you bouncing in a way not seen since THE MUMMIES or BRENTWOODS first assaulted your turntable! Contact Boom Boom Records immediately and start the fucking party!

Staying in the wild garage mode, LIGHTNING BEATMAN's Voodoo Rhythm Records brings us another, fuzzy organ-driven combo by the name of ROCKET SCIENCE. Their *Burn In Hell* 7"EP features some incredibly primal garage inspired by DMZ and LYRES. There's also a psyche feel to it all that really pushes it over the edge. I've yet to hear a Voodoo Rhythm releases that didn't get my ass shakin'.

Italy Records was one of my favorite labels, releasing killer singles by bands like CLONE DEFECTS, SOLEDAD BROTHERS, and one very well known two-piece. Italy CEO Dave has decided to pour his efforts into a new record store in Detroit (Young Soul Rebels) and has turned over the label controls to BEN BLACKWELL, an actual Dirtbomb! They said it couldn't be done! He's renamed the label Cass Records and the first two releases are out now! The first being by a garage band that does tunes for Nike commercials and the second is the debut 45 by THE CYRIL LORDS, a Detroit band who'd be totally at home sharing the stage with ROCKET 455 or THE HENTCHMEN. "No More Good Times" b/w "Where Do Girls Go?" features two certified hits to get the garage rock crowds in a tizzy. Watch out for future Cass releases by SAGGER and THE MYSTERY GIRLS!

...THE VATICANS...!!!... "Commotion" b/w "Talking About You" ... Too bad there's girls in the band, cuz I'm gay!!! ...Gay as they cum ...COCK ONLY!!!! .....The boys though... Pretty sexxxy for bald guys... Ahhh, these cats almost get my cock hard enough to fuck your grandpa's starfish!!!!!!! ... ALMOST... !!!!! ....Actually... This is pretty good... I mean I'm not licking buttholes right now... But fuck I wish I was!!!!!!..... This 45 sounds like sucking cocks in 60s mod London..... !!!!... I'll fuck the whole band... Girls and all... !!!... Pure Filth

Records, suck me... SUCK ME NOW!!!!!!..... (MW)

One thing this column has been missing is coverage of metal records. No really...*I'm totally serious*. However, I was surprised to learn that Contaminated Records was releasing the debut 7"EP by Memphis metal-heads EVIL ARMY. Of course, wherever Contaminated goes, LOST SOUNDS folks go too. Evil Army's *Conquer Human Life* 7"EP was recorded by Jay Reatard and Alicja Trout and, yes, it *is* a metal record. However, this ain't any of that hair metal or "sports bar metal." This is some super-fast early DRI-influenced shit. Naturally, one would assume there would ample amounts of darkness and punk/hardcore for Contaminated to take interest, and there's plenty of both here. If your are looking for a little adventure outside of the weirdo garage punk you'd normally buy, this is certainly worth a look.

I've said it before, and I'll say it again: Kapow Records knows how to get vinyl hounds all worked up. There's always something really cool about their releases: the weird, splotchy colored vinyl, their always great artwork and their knack for finding good, young bands from Southern California. This month, we get a great single by the punky, female-fronted LIPSTICK PICKUPS, "Better Than You" b/w "Make Your Bed", and a one-sided silk-screened 12"EP from the skate/thrash maniacs known as STREET TRASH! I'm sure both have plenty of variations to drive collectors crazy (a tip: the Street Trash record is available in two different vinyl colors), but both deliver the goods as far as great listening.

Another one of LA's bright spots, THE FLASH EXPRESS, finally has an album, *Introducing The Dynamite Sound Of The Flash Express*. If yer gonna name you album with some "dynamite" claim, you better be able to back it up. They do, as anyone who has heard their singles will attest to. Almost all their previous output is present here, with tons of new stuff made popular by their great live show. CD on Hit It Now and LP on Uppercut...decisions, decisions.

Norton Records is probably the premiere straight garage label around, and has been for quite some time. One of the things I really dig about them is their dedication to singles; specifically all the weird jukebox singles series that they do. It appears that they've taken a hiatus from the likes of THE MIGHTY HANNIBAL and GENE VINCENT and gone straight to NOW for their new singles series. They've got a mammoth plan to release 15 (!) split 7"s featuring some of today's finest rock 'n' roll and garage bands doing their best ROLLING STONES covers! The first two singles are out and if they're any indication, this series is gonna be one of the history books. The first installment features THE KNAUGHTY KNIGHTS (previously heard on an incredible Solid Sex Lovie Doll single) and THE WILDEBEESTS, while the second has Detroit's great HENTCHMEN and Memphis' REIGNING SOUND. Hopefully they haven't blown their wad with these two, as all four of those bands are pretty heavy hitters.

Tower 13 is a new compilation LP put together by the beach punk barons known as Hostage Records. It's basically an update of *Beach Blvd.* or the old *Rodney On The ROQ* comps, which shouldn't come as any surprise. The Hostage stuff is hit or miss with me ("miss" more often than not), but I know a lot of you folks polish your STITCHES singles every night before you beat off to 'em, so this might be right up your alley. I'm sticking with *Let's Get Rid Of LA*.

Portland's ELECTRIC EYE is a busy bunch this month. First, Austin's Super Secret Records has a new Electric Eye 7"EP entitled *Raise The Sword!* Normally, that would be the main draw, but we also get *Electric* Wisdom, their debut LP! They're all over the place on this album, as they do some tunes that are just full-on "rawk" (which are my least favorite moments), then move to an interesting mixture of high-energy garage and hardcore (which absolutely rules). They even have a song that pays homage to another Portland local band, THE FLIPTOPS! *Electric Wisdom* is available on vinyl from Johnny Cat Records, while the CD is on Dirtnap...I think you know what to do.

Another Northwest band, THE MEXICAN BLACKBIRDS, also see their debut album released by Dirtnap this month. *Just To Spite You* carries on the Northwest regional tradition of drowning your guitars, voice and vibe in as much alcohol as humanly possible, resulting in some very rude and very loud punk rock in the tradition of THE MOTARDS or VALENTINE KILLERS (ex-VK Jill plays drums for The Mexican Blackbirds). Sadly a CD-only release, but CDs are far easier to steal than LPs, if that helps any...

Venturing back a little ways, In The Red has reissued the complete recordings of BLACKTOP on one shiny CD! *I've Got A Baaad Feelin' About This: The Complete Recordings* features the entire collaboration between MICK COLLINS (who had just split from THE GORIES at the time Blacktop) and DARIN LIN WOOD (of the great and often overlooked FIREWORKS) that took place around 1994. Complete with detailed liners by Collins and session producer David Katzelson, I was finally able to piece together the quick emergence and even quicker disintegration of Blacktop. I think the key word associated with this band is "volatile," both in their relationships with each other, as well as in the amazing music they made. It's all here and it's all totally mind-blowing stuff.

Now we're goin' waaaaaaay back. I recently had a conversation with friends about the fact that I spent ten fucking bucks on a X bootleg single for this column. They laughed at me, and rightly so. I felt that it was my duty to do it. If I didn't, I'd be leaving literally tens of vinyl dorks in the dark. This, naturally, made them laugh harder. Thankfully, it appears that the joke is on them. Much to my surprise, X's *Delta 88* 7"EP is probably the best material I've ever heard by them (aside from "Adult Books" b/w "We're Desperate" 7"). Wrapped in a fantastic Dangerhouse Records copycat sleeve (admittedly, the sleeve is what sold me), *Delta 88* contains the rawest, punkest X tunes I've ever heard. These 1977 demos (with KK BARRETT of THE SCREAMERS on drums!) were included in those expanded Rhino reissues from a while back (I think), but c'mon...this is what you need. "Soul Kitchen" even rocks on this! Am I going crazy?

I fucked up big time by forgetting to mention the boot reissue of the *Here Today...* 7"EP by VIOLENT APATHY. These are probably long gone, but who knows? You might get lucky. For those who don't know, Violent Apathy was a band that formed around the early Michigan hardcore scene, during the time of THE FIX and other notables. Aside from their entries on some classic compilations, *Here Today...* was their only release, a six-song 7"EP recorded by Paul Mahern of ZERO BOYS. Definitely fits the bill of being one of those lost, early hardcore treasures. Good luck finding one!

Fuck up #2: how is it that I managed to not mention Dropkick/Dog Meat's reissue of THE LEFTOVERS *Cigarettes & Alcohol* 7"EP? Maybe I did? Whatever, at least you'll be able to find this one! You like rude-ass Australian punk from 77-78? Look no fucking further! Chances are you've heard these tunes on a couple of the *Where The Birdmen Flew* comps, but this reissues gives you sleeve reprints *and* lost gem "Hermine" as a bonus! One of my favorite reissues of the year!

Hey, let's make it three giant fuck-ups in a row! I'm making up for my mistakes, bear with me! Besides, you're gonna want to know about Enterruption's *Senza Tregua*, an LP reissue collecting some of the finest early 80s punk/hardcore to ever come out of Europe. Italy is the focus here, and the bands included are CHEETAH CHROME MOTHERFUCKERS, STATO DI POLIZIA, WARDOGS, PUTRID FEVER, I REFUSE IT!, TRAUMATIC and JUGGERNAUT! Holy fucking shit! So what if I'm late, you can actually still find this out there and it fucking kicks ass over any *Killed By Death* style reissue comp I've run

across in the past year or two. The package is beautiful (WINSTON SMITH cover art!) and comes with extensive liners and a mini-poster!

THE NERVOUS EATERS are back...again. *Eat This!* is the band's new album, released by No Tomorrow Records. Spain sure goes nuts for all these 70s bands. Whatever. It doesn't take a genius to guess that nothing here even remotely hints at the greatness of "Just Head" or "Loretta," but this album ain't bad. It features both tunes off of the single Penniman put out a while back, which is a fair indication how this thing sounds overall. It's decent, but buy no means something you need to search high and low for.

That's all for this month. All Bay Area residents should attempt to catch THE ADAM CARLSON BAND, GRIS GRIS, and BATTLESHIP live at any available opportunity. All Bay Area residents should buy me beer too.

—Mitch Cardwell letsgethurt@yahoo.com

The TV screen becomes my eyes...

There's no opinion that ain't my own,

No thought that isn't mine completely....

I wanna smash, I wanna smash it all."

—The Saints

OK, so I'm ashamed to admit my weakness for the farce that is American politics. And here in California, we've agreed to acknowledge our love for outright parody and we've fucking gone for it, repeated history (Ronnie Reagan/Pete Wilson) with amazing postmodern panache. I'm talking Schwarzenegger, the Austrian-accented bodybuilding child of a fascist that is gracing headlines, drunken conversations, and I'm sure, MTV.

Now, it's been a long weekend. The job was lost, the truck was booted by the meter maids, the arm's still fractured, the Vicodin's nearly gone, and I drank a lot of vodka (of all things!) on Friday. Everyone seems pretty lost in their own personal dramas. I did have a pretty good time though, walking around Haight Street, the sacred mini-mall of hippies and technokids, with two of my good friends and a bellyful of vodka. It was just weird enough to be entertaining. And yesterday I went to Oakland Gay Pride to see Nigel Peppercock play to a bunch of very confused individuals. They were following this really unbelievably cliched duo of young ladies, two white girls doing a sorta "hip-hop inspired" anti-war piece of propaganda. One girl put her hands up to her face in a grotesque attempt at being a human beat-box. The other girl sang in a shaky soprano "defeat Bush/ beaaat Bush/ defeat Bush!" This is why the world really hates us for being queer. I mean I hate to be a bitch, but how much more irrelevant could these people's actions be? I know, people who live in glass houses and all, but at least we punk girls know how to fight a little harder, even if we so often waste that intensity on fighting with each other. It all starts to seem a little meaningless, and I'm not paying $4 of Cookie's money for MGD to dull the dissatisfaction or, preferably, to return the humor to the moment.

But that moment is replaced with another moment, and now all I see are spraypainted boys in four out of five colors of the rainbow flag. They're missing Blue, the guitarist, and the circumstances of his disappearance remain vague each time the story is repeated. Apparently they passed his car on the road heading back from a show up north, and that's the last anyone's heard of him. There are plenty of people in the Bay Area who don't believe in guitars anymore anyhow. The show must go on, so they replaced him with a telephone booth. It was initially draped with a large, stained piece of white cloth. In the middle of the set, they removed the cloth and the orange guy complained about the fact that they couldn't call collect because it was a rotary phone booth. "you assholes, you think this is a joke?" and then they tore into a song that I initially thought was about veal and whores, but which was actually about *pills* and whores. I appreciated my vantage point in this whole scenario, and I rubbed my butt on my housemate's leg.

When we were riding BART over to the show, at ease and underwater, we had the unfortunate experience of delving into a recent copy of *The Bay Times*, everybody's favorite uncontroversial mainstream gay newspaper. They'd decided to do a little exposé on everybody's favorite Austrian. In a classic effort to discuss Everything But the Real Issues, they tackled Arnie not for his lack of political credentials (credentials, hell, plans or policies or opinions on *anything*), his conservative values, his catastrophic plans for public education, or anything real and legitimate. Instead, they decided to take him to task for using the word "fag" in the 70s.

Now, duh, I know that the *Bay Times would* have a legitimate concern if this guy were an avowed homophobe. And yeah, I wouldn't wanna out myself to that guy if I were his kid. But Arnie is a New Kind of Republican, one whose rhetoric champions gay rights and Roe v. Wade. He isn't an archconservative on social polices, he just wants to hold onto his money, and he wants other rich guys to have that right, too. If you read the quote, originally from a *gay men's magazine that included "erotic" content*, you'll realize that he was using the term in a way that denotes a comfort that probably comes from knowing gay people. The actual comment was:

"Well, I have absolutely no hang-ups about the fag business; though it may bother some bodybuilders, it doesn't affect me at all," he said. *

He also goes on to compare the oppression of bodybuilders to the oppression of "fags." Alright, the guy is legitimately a moron, but an inability to see the comment as irrelevant is a definite weakness on the part of the writer, and on the members of the queer community who have totally overreacted. I'm sure an argument could be made about the fact that my opinions don't count for much, cuz I'm a "bi" feminist who only managed to show up to Oakland Pride to see a bunch of straightboys sing songs about "whores," but it's just this crazy postmodern age we're living in, and I'm not wholly responsible.

Which bring us to my real point: what is reality and what is fiction when we can watch the nuances of staged but somehow authentic romantic relationships on "reality" television, and a Hollywood hero is running for governor? Which channel is showing truth, and which one is showing fiction? The answer, of course, is neither and both, but it's not so simple. The real meat of the interview, the actual comment that held meaning if we're beginning a discussion on the kind of morality we want the governor of the state of California to uphold, has been footnoted or barely mentioned in all this press, and when it was mentioned, the analysis was superficial. Arnie admitted that he had participated in a "gang-bang" with five guys on one girl in a Gold's Gym.

"Everybody jumped on her and took her upstairs where we all got together." He said it was a good release midworkout. Now I live in a world where I can believe that a woman would want such a scenario, where I can imagine her orchestrating it. I also would love to believe that these guys had as much interest in each other as they had in her. That said, it doesn't sound like it. He mentions that everybody jumped on her—I know it's so early-90s of me, but the possibility that this act may have been sexual assault arises in my mind. And although I'm not the first woman to mention this, I haven't seen the outpouring of rage that a democrat would have been faced

with in the same scenario. I mean, does anyone else remember Monica Lewinsky? And that was consensual, pretty vanilla sex. And of course, thank you, I'm not a democrat, I'm not an anything, but it is easy to notice that the further you go to the left, the tighter the focus is on your personal life.

And when our reality, as seen through TV, involves politicians with gleaming tanned skin leaping out of narrative movies, we see them differently than if they were just more middle-aged men with bald spots. The morals imposed are loosened beyond the allowances Republicans are often given; we integrate Hollywood-infused ideas of virility, strength, and masculine leadership into our expectations. On what level would big-budget movie-loving Americans be disappointed if Schwarzenegger didn't have a little controversy under his belt? If there weren't interviews to be dragged up about his sexual escapades and use of possibly offensive slang, how good would the story be? We'd have to actually listen to the answers he's giving now, about *politics*, and that sounds boring as hell. This flexible morality allows our possible future governor to live his life according to a different set of codes, that of the Hollywood hero, who can call people any goddamn name he desires, fuck any girl any way he wants, and still rule the world by the end of the story.

Source: Schwarzenegger has "no memory" of lewd 1977 interview. Candidate says he never lived "to be a politician."

Thursday, August 28, 2003 Posted: 9:53 PM EDT, *CNN.com*

I spent almost two weeks on the West Coast between Portland and San Francisco and for most of the time there I kept joking that I thought my plane west might have actually crashed and killed me, 'cause things felt so good and so perfect, it was hard to believe it was real. I've come to expect this kind of amazingness from my Bay Area visits and this time it was compounded by also going to the punk and zine mecca of Portland for the Zine Symposium. When I read about the zinefest last year, I knew I wanted to go, and since I've also been meaning to check in with this city where so many of my peeps have landed, this was the excuse to finally get me there. It was awesome to gather with so many other zine folks in such a positive, sharing, honest, and unpretentious manner. There were tons of people there tabling and attending, and loads of workshops simultaneously happening throughout the day. It was amazing and most definitely overwhelming, but fortunately in a good way. I went to Portland expecting to see everyone I'd ever known, and that made it a lot easier to deal with running into people unexpectedly. It also made it a lot of fun to meet people I've known for years on paper or in print, face to face. And of course, as it goes in the best of all worlds at this kind of function, you reconnect with old friends and meet some new ones—I think that was the whole point of a zine social.

Portland is one of those cities that has gotten so hip and cool in recent years that you either are attracted or repelled by it. I've had so many beloved friends settle there and have felt inundated with the raves about the place, I finally decided it was finally time to check it out. I was given a bike to get around and had to figure this city out in a short time. While most of the people I know all know each other and get along, Portland seems to be one of those cities that has so much going on and so many people of a similar mindset, that things splinter off into small groups that stick to their own. Never one to settle for any one place, I was on bike, bus, and foot, making my own way through this city, and merging my worlds together. Portland is a bike city, and while I'm not such a good rider myself, I am proud of having conquered that city on a bike. Best of all was riding a hundred blocks in the middle of the night with a friend who writes his zine about bike riding from state to state. When it was first proposed to ride across town and up a mountain, I was skeptical at my stamina, but I gotta admit that I was kinda proud of myself for making it to the top of a mountain. The reward of a fantastic view of the whole city made possible by my own physical means and endurance was truly an accomplishment.

I had unbelievable synchronicity in Portland. Everything fell into place at just the right time, almost frighteningly so. I felt alive and on the move and into everything. I got to check out the Independent Publishing Resource Center and understand just why Portland is such a mecca for zinesters. I got to stay in a collective eco house full of rad people always on the move. I got to see this rad band Lost Sounds who have become my new favorite obsession (they're from Memphis, not Portland). I fell in love with the artichoke plant—which at this time of year was going to seed and had these purple spiky seeds sprouting out of the already armor like studs of its fruit base. Needless to say, I think that artichokes are punk as fuck. I learned about tree grafting and got to see some amazing gardens and eat berries off fences. I got to sit on my friends' front porch, drinking a spruce-tip Oregon beer, watching the sunset while Tragedy practiced in the basement. My life was exploding with amazing moments that will long be fodder for the "remember when" department in years to come. I live for that stuff, and so consequently, I felt more alive that I have in a long, long time.

Years ago, when I first started traveling, I fell in love with the Oregon forests and mountains, and swore I would return to spend more time there. Finally, I returned to those alpine conifers that speak so deeply to me. The mountain roads led me through these amazing trees and ecosystems with half a dozen types of berries ripe for the picking, and those majestic giants soaring high in to the sky. Up in the high desert, the sagebrush grows in trees almost as big as the windswept junipers, and there are hardly two scents and plants I like more. I was out of my mind and moved, in a way I have yet to fully understand. The land there talks to me in a deep way. But once again, schedules, timetables, and cities called to me, and I couldn't stay and figure it all out. I had to leave Mt. Hood in the distance and I rolled back into Portland with tree sap and huckleberries on my hands, twigs in my hair, and the scent of sage rolling out of my bag, to get tattooed and then hop on a plane to San Francisco.

The Bay Area always treats me right and this time around the *MRR* HQ was a good place to call home for a few days. My fire for life continued as I walked, and walked some more, once again following the trees, and ending up taking the long route to get to my destinations, while still holding onto that synchronicity of timing. Arwen and Mike indulged my editorial need to check out the best taqueria in town, followed by a long walk to City Lights Books, on which Arwen and I, inspired by our time at the Zine Symposium, were plotting out our one-night zine. The zine never quite came to be, but the plotting was more of the good stuff that you never forget. I sat around the *MRR* HQ surrounded by the history of punk rock in vinyl form, writing a column about how amazing life could be, which ended up evaporating into cyber space in the end. It's hard to even get a grip on all the amazing things that I got to do while in the Bay Area. For me so much of it is just about energy and momentum and inspiration.

Seeing old friends and having meaningful connections and conversations—and just being around my people. Of course

the books and good burritos and strong coffee and amazing trees make all this even better. But it was the From Ashes Rise and Strike Anywhere show at Gilman which ultimately got me to this place at this time and that turned out to be all that I expected. It was an amazing, packed show with two of my favorite bands—full of all that perfect punk rock energy that just made me giddy with pride with all that can be possible. By this point I was feeling like I had this family from Portland as well as San Francisco, and the best part was I knew I'd be seeing everyone again the following weekend in Philly for the Pointless Fest.

There's nothing like keeping the momentum going when things are good. I ended up home for a few days in between, dealing with the pinch of real life that eventually has to come when the vacation ends. I found myself questioning things in a big way. So many of the people I talk to of late are doing just that—questioning life, what we're doing with it, how fulfilling it is, and the hows and whys of where we find ourselves. I've been calling this the mid-punk crisis, and I think that more people are going through this in some way or another than we realize. Our punk culture is about change and movement, about transition and vision, dreams and passion. The longer we stick with things and the more committed we stay, the more these questions can start to eat away at us. Are we living up to our potential? Are we doing all that we can, or should? What if we leave one project and follow another? How do we do it all at once? How did we end up here—where we wanted to be or never thought we'd be? Are we even where we want to be? How do we take it to the next level? How do we deal with real life and keep living the dreams? How do we balance ideology with reality? I'm a firm believer that everything is possible. I want the world and I want it now. I want everything at once. I don't want to make choices and settle for anything less than everything. But sometimes that is hard too. And we all get to these hard places and I feel like most of my nearest and dearest peeps are going through a lot of hard choices and ya know, all we can do is talk about shit and share our ideas and experiences and keep on following our hearts and dreams and making them real.

The Pointless Fest in Philly was one of the most amazing things I've ever experienced. I knew it was going to be overwhelming and I knew it was going to bring together (in theory) everyone I'd ever known and people I didn't expect all at the same time. I was only able to go for two of the four days, and it was all that I had expected. The sort of overwhelming amazingness that also is hard to focus on, 'cause sometimes you really can't do everything at once. You can't have all the conversations with all the people you want to catch up with and get to know, while also watching every single band. In the end you always feel like you missed out on something. So I felt like I did pretty damn good in seeing every single band that played in those two days. I honestly couldn't stand the thought of missing a one—that is just how good the line-up was. And I also was able to see many old friends and reconnected with the extended punk rock family. And I've said it before and I'll say it again, that is the shit that I live for, which validates my entire life, which gives me hope and purpose and keeps me going. Besides the obviousness of why this fest with so many of my favorite bands and people was so good and so important—what was perhaps most amazing of all—and that was how well it was pulled off. I mean four days of non-stop punk rock, in the middle of summer in a hot basement. It was run totally DIY. There was no drinking and no smoking, no fights and no bullshit. Hard to believe in many ways, and that is what was so amazing—it was as if everyone there knew how special this was and appreciated how cool it was that the tribes were gathering and uniting and that anything was possible. And as a result everyone seemed to be positive and respectful and it was absolutely amazing. So cheers to Tony and Greg and everyone else who pulled off this amazing fest. It's a good time to be punk. There are amazing things happening. We are capable of doing even more amazing things in the future. So here is to doing just that.

xoxo Chris(tine)

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2003: A Positive Festival Odyssey II (Continued from Last Month)

I want to apologize for cutting last month's column so short. I had barely touched on the actual festival when I realized that it was 2:30 in the morning and I had an 8-hour drive ahead of me the following day. So here are the rest of my misadventures at Posi Fest 2003…

Saturday, July 12

We last left our heroes (myself and Buford—yes that's his real name) at the Scranton airport. A lot of things happened on Saturday. I missed a lot of the bands due to the various activities that transpired *outside* of the venue. Isn't that how it always goes at these fests? I spent half of that day watching people puke up cinnamon (I'll get to that, I promise), and the other half of the day watching kids waste their parents hard-earned money on a blackjack table run by Jesse Stand Hard and Dave Weinberg. The way they were running it was completely professional, with a booth and everything. They must have made hundreds of dollars that weekend.

Tangent Alert: On a side note, the big trend at hardcore shows right now seems to be gambling. Sure, I've seen the occasional card or dice game happening in the past at shows, but now it's at almost every show I go to. It definitely was in full force at all three festivals that I attended this summer. And I watched hardcore kids lose literally hundreds of dollars in dice circles. I'm not sure what my take is on this (other than the fact that I don't have that kind of money to waste), but I'll tell you this: being addicted to gambling is not edge! Who knows how many kids I've heard this summer say, "I'm only down 150 bucks, and I can't stop until I break even!" I am looking specifically at a tall, lanky 17-year-old kid who listens to *way* too much 50 Cent. I won't name any names, but you know who you are (hehehe).

Sooooo, back to the parking lot at the festival. Walking around to the back of the festival I ran into a small circle of kids who were taunting this kid in the middle who appeared to be really sick. Right away I noticed that Linas Garsys (prolific hardcore/punk artist) was the ringleader of this bizarre event. The kid in the middle was doubled over in pain, puking his guts out while Linas was laughing his ass off. I believe Linas' exact words were "Who cares about who's playing, I want to see some more kids puke!" As soon as that kid recovered (if you want to call it that), another kid stepped up in his place and said, "Okay, I want to do it." Do *what* I wondered? Why were kids so eager to put themselves through what appeared to be wrenching pain, only to be then ridiculed and pointed at? The answer lies in two things: cinnamon and rare vinyl. What do these two things have in common? Not much. But when combined and put in the hands of a sadistic hardcore artist who is known for drawing for bands like AFI, AMERICAN NIGHTMARE, NERVE AGENTS, and SHARK ATTACK, you get what became (booming voice):

The Great Cinnamon Challenge of 2003!

Basically, if you swallowed a capful of pure cinnamon all at once, you won a BARFIGHT 7", for which Linas would hand draw the cover. He was only going to do this twice, so the record would be limited to two. I had never heard the BARFIGHT 7", so naturally I stepped up to try it. Although I did

have second thoughts after watching the next kid blow half the cinnamon out his nostrils like a dragon. More like a dragon holding his neck with both hands and gasping for air like he was really choking. Turns out…he was. By watching him, I realized that it was very important to have a large bottle of water nearby before I could try this (something that this kid did not have). The firemen and security dudes were definitely waiting for someone to drop dead after this kid. And yet still, Linas was laughing. I took a few mental notes while watching a few other kids try and fail. Most kids didn't last but a few seconds before their eyes bugged out and they expelled the cinnamon. This one kid almost had it. He was definitely taking his time. But he tried swallowing it while it was still too big, and puked up what looked to be muddy sand. Now I know some of you are out there thinking, "How hard is it to swallow a cap full of pure cinnamon?" Not to be confused with a sugar/cinnamon combination that you put on your toast, this is pure baking cinnamon right out of the container. As described by its victims, it's like trying to swallow a cap full of spicy sand that burns while at the same time swells inside your throat the more you ad saliva. So I said bring it. And as STAND AND FIGHT were playing a FIRST STEP cover with the First Stephen on guest vocals, I was downing a cap full of cinnamon. It sucked (missing the cover, and the cinnamon). After ten minutes of adding spit to this clump of devil dust in my mouth, like the other dude I got cocky and tried to swallow the rest. That's when my throat went into involuntarily spasms. People were chanting "Puke, puke, puke!" My eyes bugged out and my cheeks puffed out like I was going to spew. But then I realized something that none of the other contestants had: Just chew it. In my head, I turned people's chants of "Puke!" into chants of "Chew!" And before I knew it, I had finished it all. And ten minutes later I was a nice shade of green, while Linas was drawing me a cover for a 7" limited to just two. After all that, it turns out the BARFIGHT 7" isn't all that great. So if you're a Malfunction Records completist, please send your trade list to the email address below and maybe we can work something out. The artwork is pretty sweet.

But what about the bands, you ask? Saturday was definitely intense. INTERNAL AFFAIRS, one of the few bands from California, opened up for the Saturday set and got a great response. They were definitely the fastest band that played out of all three days. Still not the biggest fan of the "When Tigers Fight" cover, but I was in the minority. This band is only going to get better. Another band that destroyed that day was MENTAL. Holy shit, I hope this band makes it out to the West Coast. While I like their demo better than both their two 7"s, this band can do no wrong live. They even let another Lockin' Out Records band, DUMPTRUCK (same members as MENTAL with a different singer), jump on the set and play a couple songs. I hate to say it, but so far Lockin' Out Records (the singer of MENTAL's record label) can do no wrong. Most of their releases are on cassette only, but they all fucking rule (get the RIGHTEOUS JAMS demo at all costs). People were seriously mobbing the Lockin' Out merch table. It was ridiculous. Anyway, MENTAL were easily in my top five favorite bands that played that weekend. Great musicianship (especially the rhythm section), great stage presence, and great choice in covers (SUPERTOUCH and UNDERDOG) made for a great show. Check out this band if they come to your town.

Another band that Grandmaster B (aka Buford) insisted on me mentioning was FROSTBITE. While I am not the biggest fan, this band definitely brings the goods. Fans of early NO WARNING should check this band out. I should mention that I finally got to see TERROR. Now for those of you that don't know, TERROR, being from California, plays San Francisco almost every month it seems. So me not yet having seen them up until now was kind of strange. But then again, I was trying not to believe the hype. I'll be honest; I didn't want to like this band. I never liked BURIED ALIVE, and I knew that they weren't going to sound like CARRY ON, so I didn't want to invest the time or effort. But I can totally see why this band is as hyped as they are. This band simply cannot be denied live. Even if you look past all the singer's cheesy requests for "more stage dives and moshing" and "I need maximum output!" you still have to admire their ability to write a song that makes kids lose their bananas. There is a reason that this band is going to be touring with mosh-core juggernauts MADBALL and HATEBREED. To a lot of people this tour is going to be a hardcore wet dream come true. To each his own I guess…

INTEGRITY were back in top form. Dwid looked surprising youthful and less psycho. It might have been the CHAMPION shirt he was wearing. They played all the hits off *Those Who Fear Tomorrow, Humanity is the Devil,* and *Systems Overload*. SLAPSHOT was okay. I was kind of disappointed, but I couldn't really pinpoint why. I guess they just seemed really out of place at VFW hall in Kingston, Pennsylvania.

Sunday, July 13th

Sunday was a pretty slow day. I spent most of it with Sean and Buford at the Youngblood table trying to help him sell shirts and records. I really had a good time hanging out with Sean. That guy is a fucking great dude. If there is anybody that should be taking over for Joe, it is definitely Sean. Not too many highlights as far as bands go. WORN THIN and FAR FROM BREAKING ruled. CAST ASIDE jumped on the bill and surprised everyone. MODERN LIFE IS WAR put on a great show as always. RUNNING LIKE THIEVES headlined the show, and to quote Buford, "Everyone ran like thieves for the door." And before all you Livewire kids start sending me hate mail, that was all from the Grandmaster B. I *liked* the first RUNNING LIKE THIEVES record.

Leaving the fest that night was definitely a task. I had to listen to Quentin and Buford argue about which Air Jordan shoe (the 4 or the 5 model) was better. It seriously came to a shouting match, with Quentin yelling something along the lines of "I don't care what the *Rev board* says, you better check your memory!" Who argues about something like this? It was humorous to say the least. Besides, everyone already knows that the Jordan 3's are where it's at. After we got to Quentin's, Joe On life (co-owner of Youngblood Records) came and picked us up. It was really nice to see Joe. I miss that dude. I was bummed that he didn't get to make it to the fest, but I was glad that we got to hang out even if it was only for one night. After spending the night at Joe's, he drove us to Lancaster where Buford and I met up with Sean at the train station and then left for Philly. That next day, Robby Redcheeks showed us around Philly. That guy is an amazing storyteller. But that's a whole different story all together. All in all this weekend ruled. I hope to see a bunch of new faces next year.

ENDNOTES:

Both Che Fest and Sink With Cali Fest also ruled. The California scene is as strong as it has ever been. Some California bands you should definitely check out are IN YOUR FACE, TRY HARDER, MIRACLE MILE, LIGHTS OUT, ALLEGIANCE, and LIFES HALT (I know they broke up, but you should check them out anyway).

The OUR TURN demo is officially gone. Please don't order it anymore. It will be pressed onto a 7" without the UNITY cover within the next few months. We do have shirts, however. They are $10 ppd.

Check out the Lockin' Out Records website and order some stuff. I haven't really been let down by anything they've put out. www.lockinout.com

A big shout-out to Connor and Andrew for driving Josh and me to Che Fest. It was worth it even if we had to listen to you guys recite every line from the Spice Girls at three in the

morning.

I finally got to meet Ronny from *Fuck You Fanzine* at Posi-Fest. After talking to him for a while about his zine and giving him my band's demo for review, someone approached us both and said "Hey Ronnie, this is the kid that swallowed that cinnamon and won that BARFIGHT 7". Ronnie promptly asked, "Was that you, Carl?" To which I replied with a proud "Yes." He then asked me something that I wasn't expecting. He inquired, "Do you drink?" To which I replied with an asserted "Nope." He then walked away shaking his head, saying to himself. "What a waste of a perfectly strong stomach…"

Culture Wars
(The Serpent Bites its Tail)

This month, I wrote the outline for this article while waiting for the owners of All Asia to open their restaurant so we could start setting up. I was supposed to be watching the door for the show we had booked that night, but instead I was just hoping that the door would open at all. It was the first chilly day of fall in Boston, and I stood outside scribbling on little pieces of paper while watching people pass me on the street. At this time, one US soldier died a day in Iraq, and the Iraqi people are left without electricity, food, medicine, or anything close to "liberation." Thoughts of punk music intertwined with empire, and my thoughts looked for roots. Read on.

Sometime in the 90s, I wrote a song called "Priests are in the Temples" with my former hardcore band THE BABY SHAKERS.

I had just returned from an intense and beautiful backpacking trip with Adam (my comrade in arms) down the east coast of the Yucatán peninsula, going as far south as Belize. From Tulum, we took a day trip west, and visited the ruins of the great Mayan city of Cobá. Around 1000 AD, during the city's heyday, Cobá was very large, covering some twenty square miles, and was the most important city in the northeast region of the Yucatán. It was the New York City of the Mayan world.

Nohoc Mul, Cobá's pyramid of white stone, stands high above the surrounding dense rainforest of Quintana Roo—and is the tallest structure of all the Mayan ruins. Adam and I slowly climbed the stones to the apex of the temple, and viewed a carpet of lush rainforest stretching as far as we could see. Not many tourists were out, and it was quiet and breathtaking.

While looking down from this great height at the rest of the archeological site, I tried to imagine a bustling Mayan city. I envisioned the people who had stood on this very same spot a thousand years ago, the priests and kings who had preformed rituals and ruled the city. I wondered how many people had died for the gods on this very stone. The priests' chamber behind us was empty and ghostly. The only sign of life was a group of bats living in a corner of the ceiling.

Similar to many other societies—both ancient and modern—Mayan priests lived off sacrifices from farmers and common folk. Priests and kings alike were at the top of the pyramid; literally, looking down at the masses that sustained them.

Back in Boston biking around downtown, I looked up at the banks, government buildings, and other skyscrapers that crowded out the afternoon sun, and saw this same temple image brought into the twenty-first century. CEOs sat at plush desks on the top floors and made millions from the exploitation of workers, while looking down at everyone below. The parallel images of the temple and the skyscraper, the priest and the businessman in his ritual dress of the Suit, were as haunting as the dark temple on top of Nohoc Mul.

Hierarchy and exploitation of the masses by a small elite has been going on for a very long time.

(And so I wrote a song.)

The wind blows, and the ancient rock pile stands baking in the sun. Lizards as big as my arm grin with mouths full of teeth and old gods sleep in the steles.

In a different capital filled with white rock, powerful men plan to defend their temple and their gods.

Project for the New American Century (PNAC), a neoconservative advocacy group, is a good example of the rational behind the pre-emptive war in Iraq, and the wars to come. The Project's goal is stated in policy papers such as *Rebuilding America's Defenses*. "At present the United States faces no global rival…America's grand strategy should aim to preserve and extend this advantageous position as far into the future as possible." PNAC urges that the US dominate the globe through its military might: using US troops, "forward bases," nuclear weapons, pre-emptive war, and even weapons in space to deter any possible challenge to US interests.

But PNAC is no *X-Files* conspiracy group. Founding members include Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and a host of other Cold War era hawks who worked under Reagan and Bush Sr., and currently enjoy high offices in the Pentagon.

Behind the worldview that PNAC spouts in their policy papers and the "memos to opinion makers" found on their web site (www.newamericancentury.org), things are very cutthroat. Might is right. You are either at the top of the pyramid enjoying your third home and a latte, or making shoes for Nike. Both scenarios are valid realities, depending on who wins. Equality, collectivity, solidarity, and inherent human rights are not in their agenda.

I'm reminded of the pigs in *Animal Farm* who corrupted the revolutionary commandment painted on the side of the barn to read:

"ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL BUT SOME ANIMALS ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS."

Inequality is as old as the temples, and modern renditions have their roots.

Leo Strauss, the so-called "philosopher-king of the neoconservatives," greatly influenced today's ideas of dominance and US foreign policy. Famous followers and former students of Strauss include Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, one of the main architects of the Iraq war; William Kristol, founder of the Project for the New American Century; and Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, to name a few.

Leo Strauss, a professor of philosophy at the University of Chicago in the 40s and 50s, taught in his lectures that an elite few were responsible for leading the ignorant masses, whether the masses wanted to be led or not.

Strauss was a German Jew who believed Nazism rose from an excess of liberalism, and only a tightly controlled population would avoid anarchy and the destruction of society. National leaders and the intelligent elite, Strauss asserted, should use "noble lies" if necessary to sway public opinion. Strauss also advocated that democracy worked best when the population was harnessed by extreme nationalism and sedated by religion. (A twisted idea from someone who escaped the Holocaust, don't you think?)

"Because mankind is intrinsically wicked, he has to be governed," Strauss once wrote. "Such governance can only be established, however, when men are united—and they can only be united against other people."

Not surprisingly, President Bush waves a US flag in one hand and carries a Christian cross in the other as he screams WAR on "evildoers." Bush also makes use of not-so-noble lies. Weapons of mass destruction, anyone?

Of course, politicians or professors did not invent ideas

of domination. Our culture holds the basic tenants of hierarchy, passed down through many generations, now manifest in all spheres of our lives.

The serpent turns, and scales slide smoothly, overlapping one on top of another down to the tail.

Against the neo-conservative view of the world stand the ideas of equality, individuality, multi-culturalism, and diversity. Things I tend to like.

In June, the Supreme Court struck down a Texas law banning consensual sex between adults of the same gender, a long-overdue ruling in favor of gay rights. Justice Antonin Scalia, disagreeing with the ruling, stated the Supreme Court, "has taken sides in the culture war."

For Scalia and the other neo-conservative freaks who want to rule the world, there *is* a war going on—between the cult of the temple, and the dangerous idea of the masses ruling themselves. If people have the freedom to fuck how they choose, what next? Universal healthcare? Women's rights? Anarchy? I hope so.

Standing outside on the sidewalk, waiting for the show to start, I thought about music as a part of culture, and its power to carry meaning. If nothing else, punk rock is part of this culture war, and I'm all for it.

Punk rock, born out of this culture of capitalism and violence, fights to rip its own head off. The snake bites its tail.

The culture war is a war of ideas and of everyday life. This is the role of musicians, poets, writers, and everyone living free within their own lives and communities. Together, we change culture, and threaten the hierarchy from below.

Punk is at its very best when it is a threat by example. Squats and collectively owned spaces are positive examples of shared property and collective decision making that flies in the face of Strauss's idea of how society in America and the rest of the world should work.

Music shares ideas and information through lyrics and feeling, and a good punk DIY show brings people together. At a show people can share music and dancing, talk with friends, meet new people, find new records, and for a moment, on a good day, leave the world of Scalia, Bush and all the other would-be priests behind.

Mayan city centers went into decline not due to one catastrophic event, but because people decided to leave their cities and live in smaller groups. Why is that? My guess is that in addition to hardships like famine and war, people were tired of being exploited.

People stopped worshipping at the priest-made altars, and the facades began to crumble.

Tail Bites Snake

The All Asia show, although off to a late start, was a complete blast. THE ESCAPED Portland punks and skins were on tour with California's MONSTER SQUAD. Both bands were really good, and THE ESCAPED really blew me away. The last time THE PROFITS played with them, it was at the Paris Theater in Portland, which has an enormous stage to run around on. All Asia in Cambridge is tiny, and the "stage" is about as big as my bed. With two singers, two guitarists, a bass player and a drummer, THE ESCAPED spilled out into the crowd, jumping around and creating a whirlwind of energy that amazing to be near. Also, the two West Coast bands invaded Boston with their friends, fourteen punks in all! Good times with these awesome people.

Thanks to everyone at the Yard in Long Island! What a fun show. This DIY space is a fenced-in sand parking lot, kind of like an enormous sandbox or an urban beach. At one end of the lot, there is a homemade stage that looks like a tree house. There were no rules, it was a beautiful summer day, and it was punk kids gone wild. ENDANGERED FECES were fun and crazy as usual (the drummer pisses in a cup and then drinks it), THE SPITZZ from Boston rocked, and EYES OF HATE played brutal classic NYC hardcore. There was a gang of girls up front, circle pits in the sand, friends singing along with THE PROFITS and all the bands, no real fights, and sand got into everything—great punk rock times!

Please send examples of the culture war to Erika Ransom, PO Box 391273, Cambridge, MA 02139. I am also looking for records and fanzines for inspiration and review, especially projects that touch on sexism, feminism, women-power, or include a female perspective. This doesn't rule out stuff from guys, of course.

A great example is my favorite record this month, PROVOKED's *Infant in the Womb of Warfare* 12". It is amazing in so many ways. I got this in Minneapolis while on tour (thanks Dan!) and somehow it was shelved in a stack of records at home and forgotten. I played it recently, and it captured my full attention from the first song. Scaba sings ferociously over dark music that holds an intensely fast beat, but the songs still have melody and a sense of drama, conflict and story. The lyrics are very personal, but at the same time deal with issues of this fucked up world. "My strength to live with happiness and joy will destroy your hold on my heart." (PROVOKED can be reached at PO Box 8004, Minneapolis, MN 55408 and the record is available from Profane Existence, PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408.)

As always, you can check out THE PROFITS's website at www.theprofits.org for all kinds of fun stuff (like a photo of the tree house stage) and back columns.

Cheers, and enjoy the culture war —Erika Ransom

Sources: *Adbusters* #48, "Hard Power" by Malcolm Roswell. #49, "Leo Strauss" by Kitty Clark. / *Leo Strauss and the American Right*, by Shadia Drury / "Leo Strauss' Philosophy of Deception," Jim Lobe, AlterNet.org

President Bush's tour of Africa was an excellent opportunity to portray himself as a compassionate man helping people with AIDS. I'm sure he'll use this image as propaganda when he runs for re-election. It's too bad the image is a false one.

Bush was praised for his "humanitarian" offer of fifteen billion dollars to fight African AIDS, but Bush's offer is not humanitarian at all. What our news media neglected to mention is that he didn't pledge any generous grants. He only offered *loans* at *full interest*, which require the exclusive purchase of patented, name brand, US pharmaceuticals at *inflated* prices. These loans would *increase* African debt to the US. Simultaneously, Bush is working to block Africa from obtaining generic versions of these same medications from other countries at lower prices. So, in my opinion, Bush's message isn't benevolent, it's "deal with the US or die."

Critics of Bush say the AIDS loans are part of a trade-off to create more US military bases in Africa. They also assert that Bush seeks exclusive contracts with African nations for drilling oil. Perhaps they're right. It sounds like something he would do. He's got a "food for oil" program in Iraq, why not a "drugs for oil" program in Africa...right?

Many African nations devastated by AIDS are reluctant to agree to the Bush "deal" because it's one-sided in favor of the US. The media has either ignored reporting about their apprehension or portrayed it as foolish and perplexing—an example

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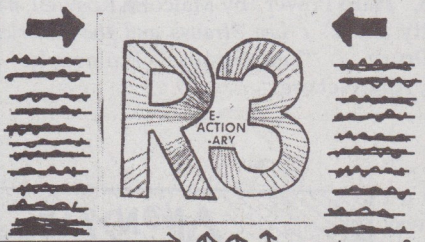

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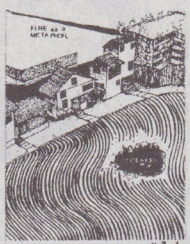

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Thanks to all who helped on the R3 tour.
maybe later: true north / r3 split (?); we don't go to their parties (2) comic; slang recording (?); fiction; recipes; the question of bombs (split zine); silence & mildew (library zine); another van; & any other project that might save us.

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One of the absolute classics of early streetpunk, this 1978 release was the band's 2nd LP, and the first ever punk concept album (or as guitarist Dave Parsons described it, "It's the story of a day in the life of the sort of people that we were and the sort of people we knew"). Songs include "Hurry Up Harry" and "Angels with Dirty Faces." This is one of those records that every punk needs to have in one form or another! Gatefold sleeve with lots of extra photos and liner notes, 180 gram vinyl, PVC audiophile dustsleeve, Italian import.

LP $14.55

"SENZA TREGUA" comp. LP

The cream of the crop of 1983 Tuscan Italian hardcore, this has 20 rare tracks from CHEETAH CHROME MOTHERFUCKERS, PUTRID FEVER, I REFUSE IT!, STATO DI POLIZIA, WARDOGS, TRAUMATIC, and JUGGERNAUT. Originally released in late 1983 or early 1984 on the legendary Bad Compilation Tapes label, this quality reissue features great vintage 1988 cover art by Winston Smith (part of which is reproduced on a full color board insert), plus an 8-page booklet of photos, graphics, lyrics and liner notes. Limited pressing of 1000.

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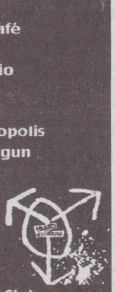

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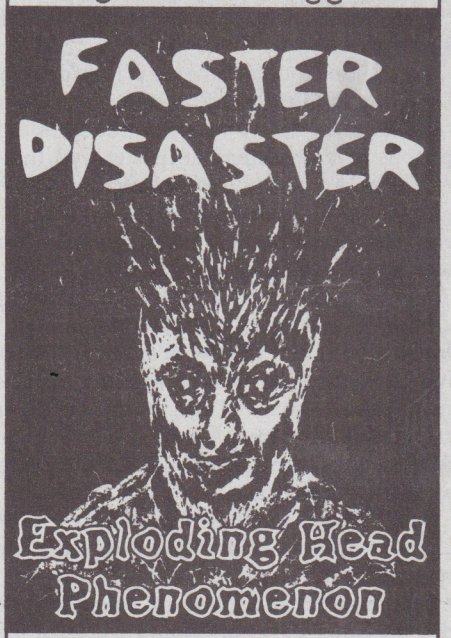

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of just how backward those silly Africans can be. But, their reluctance doesn't mean they'll evade pressure from the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, and the US superpowers. Some African leaders are trying to resist Bush, but others will submit to him.

Bush complimented President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, saying he was "a strong advocate of free trade." People familiar with Bush's brand of coded doubletalk should be suspicious of that statement. It suggests that President Museveni could be a corrupt puppet of the WTO. The WTO seeks to enforce a regulation in Trade-Related Intellectual Property rights (TRIPs) that will prevent Africa from buying HIV medication at inexpensive market prices.

Even so, Bush said Uganda is the "success story" among the African nations seeking to reverse the plague. Maybe, but I don't know. It's difficult for people who are merely observing from the vantage point of the US to separate fact from fiction. Financial and political pressures manipulate AIDS statistics all the time. A critical look at Uganda's AIDS statistics might reveal questions about whether Uganda is as successful as they claim to be.

It was reported that in the early 1990s, HIV infection in Uganda used to claim 30% of the total population. Today it's reportedly dropped to only 6%. Hooray, let's celebrate! But wait a minute, if these figures are true, what do they mean? Where did the other 24% go? Should we assume the other 24% of the populace living with HIV, are now cured...or dead? Since no one can be cured of HIV, I guess we'll have to assume they're dead. If so, how is Uganda a "success story?" Maybe the implication we're supposed to draw is that *newly* infected people haven't replaced those who've died. That would be great.

But to really determine how well Uganda has done, we'd have to know what the *total* population of Uganda was back when HIV infection was at 30%, and compare it to the total population now. For all we know, Uganda's infected population may be lower because the *total population is lower.* It certainly could be lowered by the deaths of vast numbers of people with AIDS! It's well documented by the World Health Organization of the UN, that AIDS has decimated *entire* working adult populations in Africa. Only the very young and the very old are left alive (and struggling to cope). Since reporters haven't provided us with these details, we really can't know anything about how well or poorly Uganda is managing its AIDS problem. It's misleading to judge success by HIV infection statistics alone. The figures could be false or distorted to imply any sort of politically desired interpretation. Statistical manipulation not only happens on the African continent but on the North American continent too. Here's an example:

I once took an AIDS survey designed for gay men. It asked the question, "Do you always use a condom when you have sex?" The only way to answer the question was to check a box marked either "yes" or "no."

Now the fact is...I only engage in masturbation and mutual masturbation, so I don't need a condom for sex. Condoms are only needed for *penetrative* sex. I don't engage in penetrative anal sex, nor do I permit anyone else's bodily fluids to enter my body. Furthermore, I've been in a relationship with another HIV negative guy for the last fifteen years. I'm very well informed about HIV and never engage in unsafe sex. Period. But my sexual practices don't include condoms, so when I answered the question: "Do you always use a condom when you have sex," the only box I could check was "no."

When I answered "no," it didn't mean I was unsafe, but they never asked any questions like: "Do you *only* engage in mutual masturbation?" "Do you only engage in sexual activities where *no bodily fluids* enter your body?" So I'm sure my honest "no" response was somehow twisted, and added to a statistic that declared some percentage of gay men aren't using condoms, and are therefore putting themselves at risk for AIDS. Even though there's a large number of gay men whose safe sex strategy is to refrain from penetrative sex, you'd never know it by looking at the results of *that* particular survey. Was it a simple mistake, or was it an intentional oversight to achieve a desired "meaning" behind the number? Whatever it was, the flaw in the question can now be exploited to say, "Don't waste taxpayers' money on AIDS education directed at gay men. They won't listen anyway." Or it could be used to say, "We need more education directed at gays because they're all going back to their old risky practices." How the statistic is manipulated depends upon the motive of the survey taker, but the number could be completely inaccurate in the first place!

So that's another example of manipulation. Since I already know how blatantly statistics are distorted here in the US, how can I have any idea about the accuracy of African statistics?

One statistic I do believe is that abstinence-only education is a failure. I believe that statistic partially because the Bush administration is so harsh about suppressing it! Mr. Bush asked all of the African leaders to stress abstinence in their AIDS prevention messages. Ever since the US began stressing abstinence in our own educational system, the rate of new HIV infections here jumped to two new infections *every hour* in people aged 13 to 24 (according to CDC). Since abstinence-only messages don't work here, why should they work there?

It's also reported that Bush and President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa didn't discuss Mbeki's belief that HIV doesn't cause AIDS. I guess Bush's people considered avoiding confronting Mbeki's "HIV denialist" position to be a shrewd diplomatic move. I see evading this thorny issue as a missed opportunity to educate and enlighten President Mbeki. Not that I'd expect Bush to argue the point himself. What *he* knows about AIDS couldn't fill the reservoir tip of a condom. But if Bush were serious about tackling the issue of AIDS in Africa, he would have brought AIDS experts with him who were prepared to intelligently debate Mbeki and maybe persuade him of the science. Anyway, I don't see what good came from avoiding the subject.

Speaking of South Africa, the former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, is speaking out against "intellectual property right" laws that prevent African nations from buying or making generic versions of AIDS medications. To try and stop Mandela, Bill Gates (the multi-billionaire/computer magnate who won't spend a dime on better glasses or hair) invested *two hundred million dollars* in pharmaceutical companies to enforce a legal blockade of generic AIDS drugs. This money will be used to help drug companies protect their monopolies. If I were asked to predict the outcome of the struggle between these two high-profile men, my guess is that a current corporate mega-giant named Gates has more clout and power than any out-of-office former South African President, no matter how prestigious his name is.

Speaking of drug companies, Bush appointed an ex-CEO of an enormous pharmaceutical corporation to decide which AIDS drugs will be available in Africa. This ex-CEO is someone who publicly admits he doesn't know much about the issues or epidemiology of the disease. What he knows is how to protect US corporate interests. Let's just say they aren't necessarily the best interests of the AIDS-stricken Africans.

Interestingly enough, many Africans are probably better at taking their medications than Americans, according to a *New York Times* article by Don McNeil Jr. published on September 3, 2003.

If you have HIV, it's important to take all of your medicine when you're supposed to. If you don't, you'll create drug resistance. What's worse is if you pass on a drug resistant strain of HIV to an uninfected person. The gist of the *NY Times* article

is that people in Botswana, Uganda, Senegal, and South Africa are more diligent than Americans about taking all of their pills when they're supposed to. Africans do it 90% of the time, while Americans only do it 70% of the time. This contradicts what the Director of the United States Agency for International Development said. (USAID is an independent Federal Government agency guided by the Secretary of State.) He said AIDS drugs wouldn't work in Africa because Africans don't have western clocks and "don't know what Western time is."

But surveys apparently seem to show Africans are better at taking their drugs, and the reason for that is

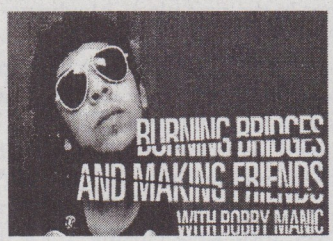
"Compliance has been easier because drugmakers from India and elsewhere are beginning to make triple-therapy cocktails that come in as few as two pills a day. (These are not available in the United States yet because of patent problems—no Western company makes all three drugs for an ideal cocktail.)"

Ho ho! Isn't *that* interesting? Not only does Bush want to force Africans buy US drugs exclusively, but according to this article, the US drugs aren't even as effective as lower priced ones many Africans already use! No matter what sort of "clocks" Africans have, two pills a day is an easier regimen to follow than the complicated, multiple-pill, anti-retroviral combinations that Americans with HIV must try to follow. I'm told HIV therapy can range from up to 50-60 pills a day, in 8 to 12 different steps! Is it any wonder that many HIV-positive Americans are forgetting to take all of their pills when they're supposed to and are creating multi-drug resistant strains of HIV in the process? All because of what the *Times* delicately calls "patent problems." What it really means is a single US corporation doesn't control the patents on all three drugs needed for the most effective pill, and doesn't own the patent on the Indian pill—so people here have to buy multiple pills! And if Bush has his way...so will Africa.

This is how corporate greed controls—and destroys—the lives of people with HIV/AIDS, both here and abroad.

But is it only greed? Some fear that if Africa gets cheaper generic drugs, the cost to will go onto the backs of Americans with HIV. They fear new drugs will not be developed if treating AIDS is unprofitable. The companies won't gamble on researching experimental medications that may fail. Research will halt. These are tricky issues I doubt the Bush crew is capable of navigating. In addition, Bush's silence on the US's HIV issues might mislead some Americans to falsely imagine AIDS is no longer a problem here. Africa's vast majority of people with HIV are heterosexual, but in this nation where gay men are so disproportionately infected by the plague, wise presidential leadership on gay issues has always been absent.

How many more Americans have to get sick before we will see some intelligent leadership? Must we wait until the USA is as ravaged as Africa for a president to care? Although Bush only talks about AIDS in Africa, it's not exclusively a problem for people across the ocean.



It's funny how when you don't have a job or someplace to wake up and go to, you loose track of what day of the week it is, and after a while what day of the month it is. I've been unemployed for almost two months now, and I am loving ever minute of it. Sure I'm a day late sending this to The Powers That Be, but that doesn't matter, what matters is that you're going to get my column, you're going to like it, and then I'm going to go back to my couch, watch *Planet of the Apes* again and drink a soda, and we're all going to be happy.

Raddest thing about living in Sacramento downstairs from some of my best friends is constantly having partners in crime to dick around and waste time with. Case in point; while my lovely lady friend was out finding employment and working seven days a week, I gave Ted Angel a hand recording new MALLRATS demos! I know I'm a real douchebag for making my lady work while Ted and I drank Pepsi and tried our best to make a brilliant power pop demo, but I think we may have succeeded. Gearing up for a trip into the studio to record a seven-song EP for Whoa Oh Records, Ted wanted to demo the new songs to teach their new drummer Charles Albright, so after buying a few hundred bucks worth of recording equipment and a compressor mic and downloading some recording programs, he was ready to make the best demo he could. We figured out a way to turn our apartments into a 24-track digital studio. Guitar tracks done in his bedroom, vocals done downstairs in my bathroom, with the cables running through the window upstairs through their living room window and into the computer. Motherfucking McGyver tactics. It couldn't have sounded better. Check out the first five songs at www.themallrats.com/malldemos_ 0803, and look for the CDEP out late this year.

The COPYRIGHTS seem to be shaping up as the new pop punk kings. Their CD on Imperfekt Records and tour with the BEATNIK TERMITES have both generated quite a bit of buzz. The sent me a demo a while back that I never got around to writing about, but now it seems quite fitting to give my two cents. At their best, they bring to mind the RIVERDALES and early SOCIAL DISTORTION; at their worst they are still only above-average pop punk. I enjoyed the raw sound of the demo a lot more than Mass Giorgini's overproduction on the album. Definitely a band to keep an eye out for in the future.

Y'know what bugs the hell out of me? When middle-aged guys are playing pop punk and writing about all the cliche high school things. The SATURDAY NIGHT KIDS just released a 7" full of that crap. The A-side is a generic DARLINGTON sounding (i.e., watered down sappy QUEERS) song about a birthday girl (yawn!) and the B-side is the worst DEVIL DOGS cover I have ever heard in my life. Bands without balls should never be allowed to cover bands that rock. This record just bugs the fuck out of me.

Speaking of middle-aged and doing bad covers... the QUEERS have just released a split CD with Italy's MANGES. Each band does six previously unreleased tunes. The MANGES do a good job of their RAMONES-inspired sonic assault; the QUEERS, on the other hand, must not have gotten the memo and recorded six lackluster covers, two of which were instrumentals. So fucking lame. Y'know how the BEACH BOYS still tour even though they only have like two original members in the band and just sound like a really bad cover band? Congratulations, Joe, you've achieved your dreams of being just like the BEACH BOYS. The MANGES tunes are gold, and the QUEERS do deliver two good covers, so this might be worth a listen so long as your expectations aren't very high... or you're a really forgiving QUEERS fan. www.stardumbrecords.com

Stardumb also just released "Monster Club" from the GROOVIE GHOULIES. They went into Sonic Iguana Studios and recorded a lot of their old hits from their first three albums, and miscellaneous covers. Originally intended to be an introduction of their back catalog to their newer fans, since up until very recently Lookout! owned all remaining copies of their older albums, Springman Records has since bought all copies of their first four albums from Lookout! and put out the US version of *Monster Club*, so now it's kinda pointless. The new versions aren't bad at all, but the originals have a youthful energy and excitement and cannot be topped. It's still the Ghoulies, so it's still worth hearing. One of the few consistent pop punk bands

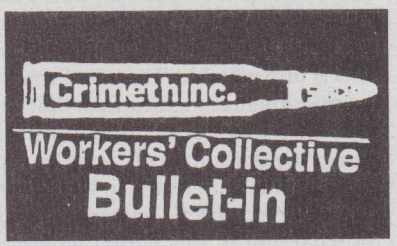
around today—you really can't go wrong.

I'm an avid read of the Pop Punk Message Board (www.knockknockrecords.com/board). It was intended to be a place where pop punkers and people who like a little bit of pop with their punk could congregate and discuss new records, new bands, and various other crap. In practice, it's where a bunch of jerkoffs try to plug their bands and argue about which SCREECHING WEASEL tune is the best. It's pretty lame but also entertaining in a sick, sad way. There are well over fifty bands represented by 423 registered posters. All but probably five of them range from godawful to average. The other five are probably some of my favorite bands around today (the MINDS, MALLRATS, RADIO BEATS...shit, maybe there was only three). Someone posted a topic about the lackluster state of pop punk and usually I would agree with him, but then it hit me. Pop punk isn't really better or worse, it's the same as it was six years ago. Most of the bigger bands are still around in some form (for better or worse) but they are receiving mixed reactions from fans. Take, for example, the MR. T EXPERIENCE, a band who has been around for damn near twenty years. Up until recently they have always been on the pop punk side of the spectrum, even though only two of their records are honest-to-goodness pop punk. Now that MTX is a little bit older and playing with an added maturity to their sound, fans are crying for a return to the sound they abandoned six years ago. Dr. Frank grows as a songwriter and is ostracized for it. A few seventh and minor chords and now fans are either crying foul or just writing them off, period. Then you've got a band like the QUEERS who have been around since the dawn of time and have had a revolving line-up since day one. They have been recording the same formulamatic (yeah, I just made up a word, whatcha gonna do about it?) records forever, and just now people are starting to wise up and say "hey Joe, got any other tricks in that bag, or just the one?" Everyone says they want bands to make the same album over and over again, but if a band does they are called mediocre or incapable of maturing. And if a band makes a terrific, classic record, every attempt afterwards is compared to it and can't hold a candle to it (i.e., the Teen Idols and their first album). So what is the cause for all this hatin'? Simple—there are two kinds of pop punk fans; kids who got into old Lookout! Stuff, moved on to emo, indie rock, choad rock, new new wave, and garage (nothing wrong with that, I endorse it), or the Pop Punk Puritans. The Puritans are a tricky bunch. They will praise the bands that don't grow musically, start bands to sound exactly like them, and denounce anything that doesn't fit into that mold. For the most part, the Puritans are the ones sending me that bad pop punk releases. Bands like SATURDAY NIGHT KIDS and labels like Mutant Pop are exactly what I'm talking about. Bands that are a dime a dozen and sound exactly the same. That whole scene is so quick to put down anything that doesn't fit into a leather jacket and ripped blue jeans.

Puritans will see the current state of pop punk as healthy and thriving, as bands pop up every day, whereas turncoats will see it as a matter of quality vs. quantity. Sure, there's an assload of pop punk bands, but 99% of them suck ass or are beating a dead horse into the ground. Making a statement like "pop punk is dead" or "all the old bands suck now" is really just you saying that you are too retarded to actually see things for what they are. No matter which side you take, neither is entirely true. As much as I shit on generic pop punk bands and old bands with craptacular new records, I don't think I could ever say pop punk is dead. Even as jaded and grumpy and disillusioned as I can be at times, I see this column as my way to show my love for pop punk and the other associated genres. The fact of the matter is that there are too many mediocre pop punk bands to begin with—not to say that there aren't any good ones left, I just think its a very cliche and overdone genre. It's very hard to be original and entertaining doing the same thing a million bands before you have done. I get so many crappy records from pop punk bands saying "hey, we're kinda like Screeching Weasel on speed," (which means "we play really fast with noodly guitar solos and nasally vocals and no melody") or "we're kinda like the Queers but put our own spin on things" (which means "we sound really immature and snotty just like the crappy Queers songs") or my favorite, "we're a pop punk band that doesn't sound like anyone else" (which is code for "we sound just like *everyone* else, not just one band but every other band before us"). There's still good stuff out there (if you weed through all the crap)—and all your favorite bands are still making records, they just can't live up to your expectations. No band is going to consistently put out incredible records each better than the previous. There comes a point where everything must peak—some bands have reached that peak, some are still trying to reach their peak doing new things. And for those of you out there that still need convincing—if you honestly, wholeheartedly believe that this genre is past its prime and the glory days are over, may I suggest just listening to your old Lookout! stuff and kindly shutting the hell up while the rest of us look for new and exciting bands to rock the fuck out to.

Bottom Line:
* Pop punk is for sissies anyway. Agree or disagree?
* The Mallrats rule my world and they got me an apartment. That makes them quite possibly the greatest band on Earth.
* Sorry I didn't cover more records this month. Not having a job means not having money, and not having money means I can't buy records. It's all a vicious circle. Besides, I think I may have had something important to say... at least at the time it seemed important.
* 2930 33rd St., Apt C, Sacramento, CA 95817 if you wanna send me some records or love letters.
* revmanic@cs.com if you wanna e-mail me to tell me I'm an idiot.

Under the Helicopters



[An eyewitness account of the CrimethInc. Barnstorming Tour's convergence, the attendant media and police witch hunt, and the usual triumph of anarchy against insurmountable odds.]

August 5 through 10, 2003, a gathering of touring theater troupes loosely associated with the radical publishing collective CrimethInc. took place around and within Louisville, Kentucky.

No, that's no way to begin. Fuck the dry AP press release tone—this has to really grab people, convey what it was like to be there—it should put readers in our shoes, not just "inform" them, as if it was possible to do so in an impartial manner in the first place. Maybe we could start in medias res, at the high point of the action:

The roar of the helicopter grew deafening as it circled lower around the house, the searchlight scouring the walls outside. Our host clasped her baby closer to her breast; we all shuddered. At that moment, the wail of a siren, the very sound we'd been fearing since the pigs had closed their siege around our campsite, rose from the direction of the road—the waiting was over, they were closing in for the kill. My companion took me aside:

"What are we going to do about the laptop? Should we destroy it, rather than let it fall into their hands?"

But I can't do that quite the way I'd like to, either.

While the court cases are still pending and the investigations in progress, who's to know what details are safe to divulge? That's one of the greatest tragedies of living in revolt: you can never speak openly about the most important things in your life without a look over your shoulder and a trembling thought as to who might be listening in. Think of all the beautiful stories we'll have for each other, all the exploits we'll brag of when capitalism finally falls! In the meantime, danger keeps our lips shut, and all too often our sagas die with us. That's the greatest advantage our enemies have—the further we go in our resistance, the less we can tell our stories, the less we can share what we learn and suffer and achieve, while even the murderers among them can talk freely and without fear, as if they have nothing to be ashamed of.

And so however afraid we are, we still must speak, we still must share everything we can without doing their surveillance work for them. For me, the primary lesson of our experience in Louisville was that we can't let ourselves be intimidated—the more we come under attack, the more vocal we must be. Security culture is more necessary than ever today, but misunderstood as a code of silence it can only defeat us. As the showdown between power and people intensifies, only more visibility can save us—less will just make it easier for them to pack us off to the concentration camps one by one. So here, censored as little as possible (but without any further references to laptop computers, or other, shall we say, red herrings), follows the short version of what transpired that crazy week in Kentucky. For the juicy, tell-all version, catch me warming my hands at the last burning barricade on the final day of judgment—I'll be thrilled to fill you in.

We arrived at the convergence site, a private farm outside Louisville, Kentucky, at the end of a long road of alternating catastrophes and miracles. We had seen our van die a bitter death and our replacement vehicle break down, leaving five of us crowded into a tiny pickup truck with a van's worth of gear; we had performed everywhere from a rural intentional community to a teen center, had gone swimming in a lake improbably owned by a high-ranking politician, and seen a spontaneous anarchist street march break out and meet with police repression; on one occasion, we had stayed up all night bailing our companions out of jail, only to pack up and depart at dawn. Shell-shocked as we were, we didn't dare expect the convergence to be more than a handful of us sitting around a campfire—so you can imagine how overjoyed we were to be greeted by a well-organized welcome center at the entrance! We embraced our friends, old and new, and were just about to drive in when another vehicle appeared from down an adjoining driveway, speeding and swerving and kicking up gravel. Emblazoned on its side was a logo: Channel 11 News. Our friends were chasing it, running to cut it off, shouting at us to get ahead of it; we gunned our engine and sped forward, blocking its path. From inside two angry and self-righteous journalists were shouting accusations and demands at our friends, threatening to call the police if they were not admitted; our friends, covering their faces, adamantly insisted that they leave immediately, until finally the car turned and drove away. At the time, we thought this was just a freak occurrence, but it proved to be an ominous indication of what was to come.

We spent the first night catching up with our old comrades, exchanging accounts of the tangled trails and trials that had brought us there. There were just shy of one hundred of us on the campsite, though I'm afraid that, somewhat more than last summer, the proportions favored individuals that had showed up for the event alone over groups arriving from tours. All the same, it was a choice bunch—some of the cleverest, freest, sweetest people I've had the good fortune to see assembled.

The next day, we met in a great circle to decide what our plans for the week would be, and that was when the first helicopter flew overhead. It was a news helicopter; the bastards, refused entry to our campsite and denied interviews with our number, had spent quite a sum to get (what we later saw to be blurry, unimpressive) footage of us from the air. We were outraged, of course, and some of us taunted the occupants of the machine as it circled us three times, but after it was gone we got back to the business of digging latrines, writing schedules, and preparing meals.

The helicopters continued over the next couple days: Fox News, Channel 11, other local channels, and a couple that were—this was somewhat more troubling—unmarked. We learned to ignore them as best we could while getting on with our affairs: sharing skills from across the anarchist spectrum, planning and networking for projects and actions to come, entertaining each other with brilliant routines and inventions—for example, one of our number demonstrated a mobile musical suit he had constructed, which would blast beats from speakers on his body while he freestyled effortlessly along in, say, a supermarket; others had driven from Alaska in a school bus converted into a mobile home, which was inspiring just to explore, let alone join in decorating with stencils. In those two days, we accomplished a lot of the goals we had in mind for the convergence—which turned out to be fortunate, as events were about to develop in an entirely unexpected direction.

At a dinner meeting called to discuss our plans for downtown Louisville the following day—a low-intensity demonstration to call attention to the corporations that were polluting its land and exploiting its people—we got word from friends in the city that we had just been on the news. Not only had we been on the news, but, according to the rumors, the headline item at five o' clock had been that an army of dangerous anarchists was congregating outside of Louisville and preparing to attack—but that, not to worry, unbeknownst to them, the police had them surrounded and were about to sweep in to foil their plans. Supposedly, the television news story even concluded with footage of police crouched in hiding places, lying in wait! Of course, as we joked then, unless they (rightly!) guessed we were some of the only people in the city without access to or interest in television, the stuff about the police preparing to surprise us was mere sensationalism and scare tactics—but all the same it was hard not to be a little shaken up. As night fell, some of us got together at the house owned by the family hosting us, to compose a communiqué to our communities about the harassment. It was there that this first chapter of the convergence reached its tumultuous climax.

In the middle of our discussion, the eleven o' clock news came on, and, temporarily breaking our ban on mainstream propaganda out of tactical necessity, we went to watch it. Yes indeed, we were the first item on every news channel at the top of the hour. There was blurry helicopter footage of us at the campsite, and the announcer referenced the episode in Columbia, Missouri in which a "flash mob" covered a federal building in graffiti and burned its flags as an example of what CrimethInc. was all about—and why law-abiding citizens had to be protected from us. As for what actually happened in Columbia, for now I'll leave that to the mainstream media to report, but it had apparently gotten law enforcement agents and network media in quite a tizzy. Also, verifying the earlier rumors, the announcer reported that police had occupied the neighboring lands: we were surrounded.

It was time to work out how to handle the situation. We were on private land, so they hadn't been able to come in yet, but it seemed clear that the police and media were working to create an atmosphere in which the public would feel that repression of we "dangerous outsiders" was justified. I've long known that the mainstream media are basically police with cameras for guns, but I'd never been on the business end of them quite as

explicitly as this. I was a little vexed about it—I'm not one of those anarchists who needs to provoke repression to feel that my politics count as revolutionary; I've always felt myself most effective flying under the radar, and prided myself on being good at staying there. Now we were locked in a standoff with the pigs without the masses anywhere in sight, like we were the Eugene Anarchists or something. How embarrassing!

Before we got far into figuring out what to do if we were invaded, a frantic report arrived from the welcome center: the car we had sent out to dumpster food had been stopped and the occupants harassed, and the police had now set up a checkpoint at the end of the one road leading out of the campsite—two police cars and a special "Investigational Services" vehicle. This was the opportune moment that the police helicopter appeared over the farm, armed with a scorching white searchlight and circling low. It seemed to us that this was either a particularly high-intensity intimidation tactic, or an indication that they were casing the campsite for an imminent incursion. Had the police sirens not begun in the distance a minute later, we might have been able to take the time to puzzle out just how seriously to take their swaggering; but once they started up, we moved on to planning how to evacuate the individuals and items in our midst that most needed to be kept out of the hands of our enemies.

We were later to find out that we were being more uptight than our friends; the kids on the other side of the farm, never ones to take anything less lightly than need be, paused in their open mic circle to dance in the searchlight, chased after it when it moved on, and one level-headed fellow even used his digital camera to catch some hilarious footage of this spectacle. It was tense in that kitchen, though: with our host's civilian mother talking about which of our communications were tapped, the steady roar of the helicopter overhead, and the stress of figuring out under duress exactly what we needed to do to minimize the impact of an invasion, it felt a little like we were inside the next Waco.

The police never did close in; the siren wailed for a little while, and then was silent again. All the same, we put the process in motion to get endangered people out—starting with a few space monkeys to test the waters, then moving on to the ones in really precarious positions, utilizing a complex system of code to receive reports at the house as to how each expedition went. By dawn we had finished. Looking back, it seems really unlikely that they were actually prepared to raid us—such an undertaking would have cost them more police and preparation than they could possibly have mobilized on such short order; all the same, the harassment was becoming so distracting that, had we stayed, we would have been badly distracted from everything we needed to focus on.

We woke up the next day at various houses in Louisville proper, extremely exhausted. We were soon joined by the remainder of our number from the campsite—that morning, our hosts had supposedly received word in no uncertain terms that the farm was in fact going to be raided, and everyone had departed accordingly. Oblique references were even made to federal agents, who had supposedly been going to find bomb-making materials on our site. Yeah, yeah—you morons find bomb-making materials everywhere you raid, at least until your claims have to stand up in court.

Now began the difficult process of regrouping a bunch of freaked out people and deciding what to do next. Our planned event of the day, the protest in the financial sector, was called off, for a variety of reasons: people were afraid the police would take advantage of it to pick us off, that the security in organizing it hadn't been tight enough, that we didn't have a clear enough idea of what we were doing there. This was disappointing to the people who had been preparing for it, and reinforced the dynamic that we out-of-towners were coming in and depleting local resources without contributing to local struggles—and, for that matter, gave positive reinforcement to the cops for the scare tactics they'd been using, assuming they did know we had planned a protest; but with so many people still afraid, and the organizers having failed to inspire broad-based confidence in their plan, there was nothing for it but to cancel.

There was some discussion as to whether we dared act as a group in public at all after the media smear campaign that presumably had the whole populace thinking we were terrorists—and for that matter, how safe were we in these houses?—did we dare even talk over the telephone?—but it was decided that the worst thing we could do would be to let them intimidate us into silence and invisibility. For our first tentative foray into public, we chose an art car show down the street from the site of the originally planned protest—we reasoned that the presence of presumably liberal art-lovers and artists would be a deterrent to serious police repression, and figured we'd be in our element among another creative fringe group, albeit car enthusiasts.

We showed up in small groups, and established a presence in the middle of the on-street exhibition: an anarchic orchestra that could be heard for blocks playing a variety of homemade instruments and found-object percussion, stilt-walkers making balloon animals for children and encouraging them to join in the chalk-decorating of the sidewalk, the omnipresent free literature table, and a number of us walking around starting conversations with the locals about the events of the past days and the ways they connected with local issues. Some of us had contacted the media to try to set things straight, but, revealing their true colors, now that they'd secured their ratings with alarmist, sensationalist tripe they didn't even bother to show up. The police did show up, however—first a single patrol car, then a number of them, including unmarked cars. In the process of monitoring them, I met a lovely old homeless guy, who, it turned out, had been running volunteer surveillance on them on our behalf already: "That's an unmarked car right there, I know that guy—he arrested me twice. Don't worry, he won't do shit unless his boss tells him to. You kids are good people, I'm glad you're here." At that moment, I felt grateful again for the open wounds on my hands, the tangles in my hair, the dirt on my clothes, which had only seemed like liabilities over the preceding days when at any moment I might have had to pass for a civilian: these were signifiers connecting me to an entire world of other marginalized peoples, folks with the same natural enemies and longings.

And as it turned out, at the very moment that the police were assessing the situation, the organizer of the show was talking to one of us—expressing gratitude to us for showing up and enhancing the exhibition! She invited us to a parade they were holding through downtown Louisville the next day. Then, when the police approached to mess with us, she intervened, informing them that we were part of the event and not to be bullied. A long argument ensued, at the conclusion of which the police officers departed in frustration, leaving only a single car to circle the block.

From the exhibition, we headed to Bardstown Road, the main commercial drag in Louisville. It was Friday night, and the district was crowded with bored teenagers hanging around, hip young professionals going clubbing, and older folks dining out. We began a parade up and down the road, complete with marching drums, singing, outlandish costumes, and runners giving out free food easily dumpstered from behind local establishments, much to the merriment of all. At the outset, there were perhaps less than fifty of us, but that number swiftly doubled as more and more passersby joined in off the street. We even came across a couple backpackers who had just hitchhiked into town in search of us. The police kept tabs on us, but again, under the eyes of a wide public, were unable to do more.

Passing drivers honked and cheered, a surf band performing at a nearby nightclub came to join us with their great gong in tow, shouting out their own quirky versions of Seattle protest chants, and there was joy in the air as the urban environment everyone had taken for granted was transformed. At the end of our second circuit we quickly dispersed, and though some of us were followed by police we all managed to lose them.

Asking directions back to the neighborhood where we were staying, my friends and I had the most inspiring experience of the week. The middle-aged, lower-middle-class couple we accosted gladly directed us, then engaged us in conversation:

"Did you make that [impressive homemade musical instrument] on top of your [vehicle]?"

"Yeah, it's the fourth one I did, the first one that's really audible."

"Are you all from around here?"

"No, we're visiting. We were staying on a farm outside town, but..."

"Oh my god, you are! Are you—*the anarchists*?"

"Uh, yeah, but..."

The woman, practically jumping up and down: "We saw you on TV! You guys are great!"

Us: ?!?!!

"Do you do graffiti, write on walls, things like that?"

"Um, no, we're not really about..."

"Because I have to say, I love some of the stuff I see. I even do a bit myself!"

I break in here, over my nervous friend: "Well, maybe just a little..."

"Don't let them scare you with their bullshit, OK? Don't let them get you!"

"Yeah, that's what I'm saying! Don't worry, we're gonna get them!"

"Yeah, that's right!"

We drove off shouting and laughing and waving to our new friends, and at that moment it dawned on me—all those people that had joined in our parade that night, that had honked and waved or come out of the restaurants to watch us go by, they had all seen the news coverage of us, and they didn't buy it, they didn't care. If the networks said we were monsters bent on the destruction of everything America holds sacred, that just made us more interesting to them. Our enemies had brought out the big guns to discredit us, and it hadn't been enough.

I returned to our safehouse ecstatic, and spent the next hours dancing wildly to the soundtrack of *Natural Born Killers*, pausing to engage my friends in impassioned conversation about the implications of the evening's events:

"We were right to come out of the closet about wanting to smash capitalism and so on—we aren't isolated, there are millions of us! All it's gonna take is for some of us to get together and say it's on, and it will be!"

The next day, we showed up at noon and filled the streets in the middle of the art-car parade, once again with drums and banners and free food. It turned out we were parading down the same route we had the night before. There was a problem with someone's engine ahead—it would overheat if they drove too slowly—so the cars forward of us ended up driving quickly on, leaving us fronting the rest of the parade. Without really meaning to, we led the main body of the parade off its permitted route, along the commercial thoroughfare once again, to cheers and clapping from the sidewalks. Eventually a police officer, his hands full trying to supervise traffic, showed up to direct the drivers back to their route, and we were left alone, still occupying the street. We eventually regrouped in the parking lot where the art-cars had gathered for one more exhibition, and established a presence there as we had the day before, giving out massive quantities of literature and engaging in numerous conversations with locals about the police, the media, and the possibility of another world. Throughout everything, we felt exceptionally well received by the citizens of Louisville, excepting the police, of course.

That night was the show for the barnstorming tour groups, which had been clumsily attached to a local punk rock benefit show. This was another trying, awkward situation: there had been some trouble with the show, only partly owing to our involvement in it and the subsequent attention it had received, and it had been moved over and over from venue to venue—finally coming to rest in a suburban family's basement. We set up our literature table, started some good conversations and so on, but it soon became apparent that the hosts weren't interested in making it possible for us to participate after all. Still hoping to make something of a difficult night, we scrambled to find another venue, and eventually relocated everyone to another house. Exhausted but buoyed by the feeling of being among friends, the various remainders of the barnstorming groups showed off some of the agitational performances they had been doing around the country, to much rejoicing. The show ended up being mostly for us, the "converted," but it was still important that it happened under the circumstances, as an affirmation of our indomitable determination—and I think all of us there knew that the real deal is to get our artwork and activity out of the radical ghetto and into the public arena, whenever it is possible.

On the final day, ready to take it easy, the remnants of our group gathered at a popular Louisville park known for its unlicensed swimming. In the Fellini version of our story, the movie ends there, the camera panning from the "NO WADING—NO SWIMMING" signs to the fountains overflowing with laughing people of all ages and backgrounds—the everyday anarchists, taking their rights by storm without need of a manifesto for justification, the ones we can count on to ensure the success of the revolution once we manage to set its wheels in motion. When you're a revolutionary, of course, real life is always better than any movie, and so we still had time afterwards to hold a dumpstering and cooking competition that culminated in a great feast and dance party. It was not exactly confrontational politics, but we felt we'd earned the right to "indulge our desires" (as the straw men in the anti-CrimethInc. myths and rumors always do—boy, must they live high on the hog!) a bit after the harrowing situations of the previous days.

We exchanged contacts and oaths that we would meet again for further adventures, one of our number made one more useless attempt to contact the media (which was rewarded with a helicopter visit to our safehouse, absurdly enough), and we were on our way to the next stop in tour—where we found the police waiting for us, once again. But that's another story!

So what worked this summer, and what didn't? Let me say this, first—our enemies fucked up royally by threatening us without following through. Being in a situation like that is intensely frightening—not that I haven't been under helicopters and surrounded by police over and over at demonstrations and so on, but this was the first time I'd experienced them coming for us—but next time it happens, I'll be calm and collected: Sure, we're under siege and they're preparing to attack, but last time this happened everything worked out. Keep cool but don't freeze, as my friend always says. Any time they give us the benefit of a practice run without the usual costs, it's a gift—it's not easy to get field practice being an embattled revolutionary! Being able to gauge actual levels of risk and resist intimidation tactics is important, and now a hundred of us are better equipped to do so. And despite everything, we did accomplish the greater part of our goals in converging: skills and ideas were exchanged, plans were laid, some crazy adventures of the kind you can't organize in advance took place, a little more visibility for the anarchist perspective was achieved (and a few more

crazy stories entered circulation), and, perhaps most importantly, the bonds of existing and new relationships were forged in fire, to stand us in good stead in the future. In addition, we did reclaim a couple streets, our hosts and some others to experienced firsthand what the police state is like in action (a radicalizing experience if there ever was one!), and we got away without a single arrest during the whole week, despite intensive surveillance and the fact that perhaps more than half of our number were career criminals of some kind or another.

Things that could have been done better? There are some obvious ones.

This year's format certainly didn't do much to enable the participation of anyone from outside the traveler-kid cultural context, that's for sure. And I think the witch hunt could have been fended off early on if an experienced group had been doing police and media liaison work—those of us experienced enough to do so were unprepared and already overworked. The fact is—as much as we can turn the experience to our advantage—they did succeed in intimidating us, and we should have been able to resist such tactics. If the local organizers and the organizers of the barnstorming groups, especially the ones with the most previous experience in such situations, had worked more closely together in advance of the gathering, we would have been much better equipped to deal with such crises, and could then have concentrated our energy on precipitating crises for our foes rather than coping with them ourselves. Hell, things can always benefit from being better organized—there's never any shortage in room for improvement there.

But enough about the past—let's get out there and put these lessons to use.

No longer particularly impressed by helicopters, but thinking more than ever about how they might be brought down to earth,

—CrimethInc. Secret Agent F.G. Markem

"One must always aim to act in the full light of day, bearing in mind that the best way to obtain a freedom is to take it, facing the necessary risks; very often a freedom is lost, through one's own fault, either through not exercising it or using it timidly, giving the impression that one does not have the right to be doing what one is doing."
—Errico Malatesta, "Anarchist Propaganda"

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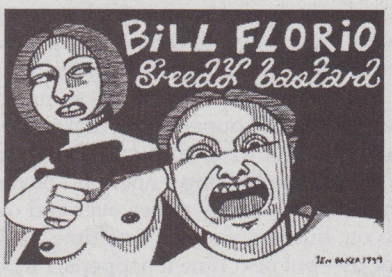


Last week my mom calls me, with an odd request... "Do you know anyone that owns a BB gun? I want someone to shoot the damn pigeon that's crapping all over the house." I replied, "I do, I got one in Florida for no apparent reason, other than that you can't buy one in New York."

I took a road trip down to Florida. It was a good 24-hour drive, so I split it up into two twelve-hour driving days. It turns out that the exact getting-sleepy mark between Miami and New York is South of the Border. I guess fireworks are illegal in North Carolina, so the first exit on 95 in South Carolina is a huge fireworks store pretending to be a roadside attraction. I stayed in the hotel there, which I can only describe as swampy, and ate the food, which was beyond greasy, and bought some blockbusters and got the hell outta there. By the way, I attempted to explode a canned ham on stage at a CRUMBS show and none of the fireworks ignited—maybe it was the high humidity in the hotel.

Anyhow, I was gonna stay with Chuck Loose, but Chuck was passed out in some sort of drunken stupor and turned his phone off the morning I arrived, so I was sort of waiting around for a few hours and I bought Daisy rifle in a K-Mart and went off into some alligator-infested area to shoot at empty Pepsi cans.

When I was little... Although I'm old enough to write for *MRR*, it really wasn't all that long ago, I mean I did play video games for most of my childhood, it's not like I shot marbles and played mumbly-peg or some shit like that. I'm not like Mykel or Bruce where I can relate to *Our Gang* and we never called pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey pinthetailontheyouknowwhat for crissakes. But if you go into the modern day toy store or check out what the modern day 11-year-old plays with, it's really sort of depressing. I mean, I don't exactly expect the average kid to do things to relieve boredom that I resorted to, like throwing rocks at cars from a high stone perch or play dodge ball with billiard balls and cardboard shields. But, I had a shitload more fun than Gameboy and Yugio.

OK, let's just state for the record that I was a really good kid, and I'm a nerd, but until I was at least 12 or so, I could always find at least one kid to assist me in whatever stupid activity I dreamed up for that week. Here's a list of crap I used to do that I never ever see kids doing.

Gun fights. Screw war toy activists—it's no freaking fun having to play with guns that look like new wave neon scuba gear. True, the newer water guns shoot farther and hold more water, but they also break just as fast as the old ones. I remember once I thought it would be cool to fill the water pistols with red ink (not vegetable dye). I think that kid's mom disliked me after that simulated bloodbath incident. Also, once the water guns were exhausted, we had peashooters. A small deli run by a really, really old couple seemed to only stock items that parents hated and kids could scrounge up enough money to actually afford. You could get ten industrial strength straws and two bags of peas for like two dollars and get a good hour and a half of spit-laden fun in before someone was hit in the eyes and went crying home. The other great projectile game was clothespin guns, which consisted of a short 2x4 with a clothespin glued to one end and a big long rubber band tied to the other—if you set it up right, you could get a small rock and get the kid who got hit in the eye with the pea hiding in his house for a week.

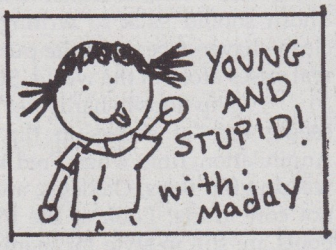
Science projects gone wrong. I got a chemistry set for Christmas once and it was nice enough to warn me what not to mix together. Of course this was the first thing I tried. We spent an afternoon, feeding different concoctions to various animal life such as ants and squirrels. They used to sell water rockets in toy stores too. This was basically a bike pump and a plastic rocket that you'd pressurize and it would shoot up about 30 feet and usually get everyone wet in the process. I guess too many kids shot themselves in the face, because I can't find them anywhere.

Of course, the main thing I always seemed to be doing was building things. I think I managed to build the following things: a wooden tank that was obviously way too heavy for the baby carriage wheels I was using, and ended up as a large pile of lumber at the base of a very steep hill. A fallout shelter which consisted of a five-foot deep hole in the ground with a trap door built above it. This project was abandoned and poorly filled in after a stray cat took a bloody dump in the hole. We are now reminded of it after an extended driveway was paved over the site and the bunker became a large pothole, which seems to never get filled in correctly. I built a tree house with some old iron fence I found lying around which ended up sending my sister running home with a cut on her head and a tetanus shot. It's funny, because a lot of parents would probably encourage their kids to read books, but it was because of all the books I read that things like a 12-foot armored vehicle ended up flying down the

hill at 30 miles per hour with me inside, narrowly missing a painful, splintery death.

It's weird that kids all have access to the internet these days. My one attempt at some sort of communication fun was getting a CB radio. I spent about a month cursing out truckers who were passing by on I-87. I think if I had access to the internet I would have been one of those kids who went to jail for emailing bomb threats when they had a big test at school the next day. All I know is that I would be downloading music and bootlegging DVDs like no tomorrow…oh wait, I do that now. I guess I am still a little kid. I'm gonna get that BB gun outta the closet.

Email me your kid stories to bill@candids.com



Hello dudes, dudettes, self-same idiots, punk rockers of all stripes and polka dots, International Brigaders, and Dr. Pepper-drinkin' straightedge dorks! Question of the day: What's more punk than the ONION FLAVORED RINGS, train hopping, the new punk rock basement speakeasy in Milwaukee (called Loose Stools!) and Civil War re-enactors, combined? Answer: Nothing—except for the number five bus in the hometown of HÜSKER DÜ, DILLINGER FOUR, and the Mall of America—Minneapolis! Allow me to explain!

When I moved to Minneapolis a couple of years ago with my sister Emily and my friend HJ, we rented the first floor of a house in Elliot Park—a neighborhood mostly known for being the location of both a recent act of police brutality (in which cops shot a mentally ill man wielding a machete) and a conservative Christian college that does not allow homosexuality. Punk! But, even better, our house was just one block from *the* bus line in Minneapolis! The five! The five takes you from the northern ghettos all the way through downtown to the way southern Mall of America. Although Minneapolis also has an express bus to the mall, it costs 50 cents more, making it the upper-class option. The truly broke ride the five—for at least an hour—to get from the crack house to the Gap. Punk!

Anyway, given my desire/ability to only find the most ridiculous jobs, I was soon working at not one, but two locations on either end of the five's route. On the northern end was the women's shelter where I gave people their lithium on the night shift (8 pm to 8 am!) and on the southern end, in the Mall of America, was the cereal-themed amusement park where I told people how to use the Trix skee-ball machine and once dressed up like Lucky the Leprechaun and walked around the mall running into kids. (Note: the last time I wrote about this place, I was about a c-hair away from getting sued! Seriously! No names this time, Mr. and Mrs. Lawyer! Note #2: C-hair (Cunt hair), a term from the printing industry, is the new hip phrase on the streets! Ya dig?)

Anyway, all of this meant that I took the bus at least twice a day, sometimes more, and was soon to realize that the five was, in fact, not a bus at all, but a living (and therefore breathing) community of some of the most amazing residents of the fair Twin Cities! To quote Walt Whitman, oh the leaves of, uh, druggies, abusive parents, and deranged bus drivers! Poetry!

The druggies were always out in full force. I've seen many a bus drug deal in my day, but on other buses, they all take place in the back of the bus—the space designated for all illegal business transactions, cradle-robbing make out sessions, and gang wars. But on the five, no one bothered to move to the back. People would sit down, right across from the driver, turn to the person next to them, and say, loudly, "Wanna buy some weed/crack/uppers/downers/vicodin?" And, in the interests of fair and equal treatment, it was not unusual to attempt to sell these items to the bus driver as well.

The most consistent drug dealer was picked up every morning at the bus stop in front of the main hospital in downtown Minneapolis. He would sit down in the front seat, and without fail, the same middle-aged white woman wearing frosted jeans would come sit across the aisle. She'd say, "Are you sellin' today?" And the man would have to stop and think—because the main drug dealer on the five was an elderly man who went regularly to get his prescription painkillers from the hospital! Most of the time he'd sell; but not before thinking out loud about his options. "Well, I just don't know. The pain is pretty bad today." Sometimes this seemed to be a clear tactic for increasing the price—and it usually worked, driving up the price of each Vicodin pill by as much as a dollar. Other times, the situation was more ambiguous, and the man seemed clearly torn between his needs and the needs of his middle-aged drug addict customer/friend. And, sometimes, he just wouldn't sell, getting on the bus with a determined stare, and saying, simply, "Not today, not today."

The drug deals, both geriatric and juvenile, were nothing, however, compared to the other chief five vice: child abuse! If the Department of Child Protective Services worked under quotas, this would be their first stakeout point. At times, my sister and I felt like we should give some social workers a call and tell them they could score at least a dozen kids in under an hour! For just the cost of bus fare! However, to nab the kids away from their parents, the social workers would have to fight the other bus-goers—all of whom approved of and encouraged the rampant beating of children under the age of two. Punk!

One night on the five, a woman got on with her one-year-old in a stroller. The baby was crying—it was around midnight, and they were taking the last bus home from the mall. Despite her repeated warnings, "Sit down in your stroller! Sit the FUCK down!" for some reason, the one-year-old was so INSOLENT and DISOBEDIENT that he flat-out refused to listen! Those damn babies! The woman glanced around and met the glances of her fellow bus riders, who offered up words of sympathy. "Man! Kids do not fuckin' listen!" "If that was my kid, I'd show him how to behave!" "Aren't you gonna put him in his place?" Perhaps encouraged by the words of advice, the woman raised her hand and slammed it into the baby's face. "THERE! SIT THE FUCK DOWN!" she screamed, to the approving nods of everyone around.

But this woman had nothing on the most consistent repeat child abuser on the five: a middle-aged woman with no teeth and stringy long black hair and three kids, ranging in age from around four to fifteen. My sister and I ran into this woman on the bus AT LEAST four times a week, not counting the number of times we ran into her at the mall, sitting on a bench outside Auntie Annie's pretzels. Whenever this woman and her kids got on the bus, you just knew things were gonna heat up. Fast. "What the fuck is your problem?" "What the FUCK do you think you're fucking doing?" "What the fucking FUCK!" "FUCK you fucker!" "FUCK!" Who was so articulately displaying their grasp of the finest swear word in the English language? All four of 'em! Punk! Usually the twelve-year-old boy would start by telling his mom to fuck off, which would result in his mom telling him to go fuckin' die—at which point, she'd glance around the bus, and, naturally, everyone would chime it, "Yeah, fuck those kids, man. That poor woman with those damn disrespectful kids." Then the four-year-old would make some reference to his mom fucking someone, and then the fifteen-year-old daughter would reach down to slap him. All right!

The best nights on the five, coming home from a hard day of work impersonating cereal characters and explaining

how grain is harvested to make Cheerios, always got started with this woman and her kids screaming at each other. On a good night, the woman would get a crowd behind her, as though she was a boxer, and with every shout, the approving bus riders would also shout, or even, on some occasions, applaud a particularly creative use of their favorite word. Then the drug dealers would ask anyone if they needed anything, getting on and off every few blocks. And then, after about ten blocks into the hour-long bus ride home, the best drivers would make their power clear. "All right, all you fuckers! We're all tired and I don't want any SHIT! We're all in this together and we're gonna get this damn bus HOME!" Everyone's favorite bus drivers always had a speech prepared, and although it did nothing to calm down the riders, it created a deranged sense of community. Yes, we, the only people in Minneapolis so broke that we ride the five, instead of the express bus home from the Mall of America, well after its closed for the night, we the people who need this time to get drunk, high, beat our kids, or pick up sex partners, are all going THE SAME WAY! Yes, we will all get home, one way or another! Despite our different-colored oversized polo shirt uniforms representing our various shit jobs, we are in this together! At the high of the bus driver's speech, everyone would break into euphoric applause, creating a brief 30-second interval in which no drugs were sold or 40s drank. And in these few seconds, it felt like there was surely nothing finer than to be riding the five on a Tuesday night straight through Minneapolis, armed only with a stolen bag of Trix cereal and a bus ticket!

The bus drivers who chose not to deliver a speech had it much harder, as it became clear that they really did have no control over the bus—evidenced by an event my sister observed in which the passengers convinced a bus driver (who had already inexplicably gotten onto the freeway—definitely NOT on the bus route!) to go drop off someone who lived even further off the route, resulting in a one-hour delay! Woe to those who cannot keep the riders of the five in their place!

By the time I left Minneapolis—one year later—I was an official five regular. All the main child abusers and drug dealers would give me an approving nod as I got on. If I didn't ride the bus in a while, the bus driver, clearly concerned, would ask me if anything was wrong. And when I saw the crazy woman and their kids outside of the bus, we would look at each other in mutual hatred. Although, unlike most riders of the five, I did not have my own kid to hit, nor did I practice on anyone else's, and I never bought painkillers from an elderly man, I was still a part of the five. On one of my last days in Minneapolis, a man yelled to me from across the street, "Hey baby, wanna ride with me?" I looked over, and he was standing in front of the bus stop.
—Maddy
PS. If you haven't checked out THE MODERN MACHINES yet, what the fuck HAVE you been doing—listening to EARTH CRISIS and eating sugar-free candy? As we say in Wisconsin, Geez! GO to www.modernmachines.org to learn more about the HÜSKER DÜ-infused genius from the punk capital of the modern world—Milwaukee!
PPS. I'm back in the États-Unis, so go ahead and send me mail now! 296A Nassau Ave. #3L, Brooklyn, NY 11222

Most pressing issues first. Mr. Mike Thorn mentioned my moustache (make that MOSHSTACHE, sucka) in the last issue. OK, I sported this moustache for all of three weeks. It was a bet with the other members of Damage Deposit. We were playing one very metal show with Martyr AD and thought it would be a good idea to put the 'stache back in thrash for this event. In the end Mario, Colin, and Nic backed out and it was left to Ben Crew and I to represent the facial hair at the metal show. I backed this up by wearing a cop uniform that would have made the Village People proud. Photos will appear on the Damage Deposit website before long. I promptly shaved off the 'stache the next day. I have been rocking 'stache-free for some time since. But you know what, so what if I grew a moustache. I mean there's no reason you can't be DIY and rock the 'stache at the same time. Who is Mike Thorn to make the rules and say moustaches aren't core? *(uh... I'm the coordinator of MRR. Duh. ed.)* At least one super hot local super punk girl thought the 'stache was rad, although most said I looked like a child molester *(well... to be honest. ed.)*. I think Mike Thorn should stick to writing burrito reviews and keep his clean-shaven face outta the punk fashion world when there are real crises afoot in the world. Such as:

Flip flops in hardcore! Who the fuck started this? I keep seeing kids at shows in flip flops. In fact, I went to see Annihilation Time when Fred was still singing and duder was wearing flip flops, Oakley's, and Jamms. What the fuck? That's not core, dude! Look at the map—this is Minnesota. Leather boots are still in style for manly footwear in these parts. I saw the singer of a local tough guy hardcore band at a show the other day in flip flops. What the fuck? Tough guys should wear shit like 18-hole oxblood Doc Martens with steel toes. Sorry, but all the militant SE posturing in the world is gonna come off superficial without proper footwear. I wear Red Wing boots year round—do you know what's going to happen to your delicate flip flop-clad feet when you get caught in a mosh? Fucking broken toes and shit. That's fucked up. Flip flops out of hardcore now!

Pointless Fest in Philly was fucking amazing! Thanks to all the kids who came out and made this shit larger than life. Most of the best bands in North American DIY crust and hardcore got to play, plus last-ever gigs from Totalitär. And best of all, the show was attended by 100% die-hard true believers from all over. There were almost no poseurs, just people who really believed in the thrash. It was great to see so many friends and great bands in one place. Inepsy and AOS totally took my by surprise, as I've never been into either bands' records. Totalitär, Tragedy, From Ashes Rise, Drop Dead, Aphasia, Municipal Waste, Crucial Unit, World Burns to Death, Caustic Christ, man, so many great bands coming one after another like some sort of three-day multiple thrash orgasm.

Tough HC/moshcore bands No Warning and Sworn Enemy have signed to major labels, following Hatebreed's lead. Rumor has it the industry is going to try to market tough guy mosh to the Korn/Bizkit crowd as "urban metal." I hope this one doesn't pan out for the industry.

Here's something I've been thinking about a lot lately. I think the punk scene, especially the street punk/pogo punk scene, at the moment is sitting wide open to another onslaught of right wing/nazi organizing and attacks. There are fewer and fewer people active in the scene today who remember all the trouble nazi skinheads caused in the 80's who will take a stand. And since Sept 11th, it seems more and more common for bands to avoid political topics altogether or even to swing to the right. I look around at a lot of places and I don't see a lot of kids who would take a stand until it was too late. From what I know, the far right in this country is currently leaderless and regrouping. I would be very concerned that a new breed of youth organizers might come out of left field and try to capitalize on the current political situation to start a lot of trouble in the youth culture. Keep you eyes out for this sort of activity—this is a war we don't need to fight over again.

One last thing, and this is deadly fucking serious. I'd

like to open the floor for debate on Linear versus Circular Mosh. I've noticed on tour that in a lot of towns the circle pit has been replaced by this sort of "red rover" mosh that's really just three guys running back and forth across the room and mashing into the crowd. This one-man wall-of-death thing I think is ass backwards. In the circular mosh format the energy is concentrated towards the center of the room. The participants contribute to each other's intensity, building like a hurricane about to hit Miami. But in linear mosh, the energy is diffused from the center outside the pit. The energy at a show needs to be up front by the stage—this is where the stage dives and sing-alongs occur. Driving the energy to the sides and back of the room just goes against the laws of physics and creates a vacuum in the center of the room into which no energy builds up. As Ready To Fight put it, "circle mosh or fucking die!"

Boss records that made my summer: A-Team 7", Career Suicide 7", Knife Fight 7", Violent Minds 7", In the Wake of the Plague 7", Uncurbed 10", Headless Horsemen 7", To What End 7", Sitkids LP, Martyr Dod LP, Oktobr 7", Exhale/Diallo split 7", *Copenhagen Hardcore* double 7" comp. Rock that shit.

09/16/01

No.

I just drove out of NYC. It was a nightmare. A mountain of smoke hangs over Manhattan; no one is happy. It stinks, really bad...Asbestos, burning flesh, glass particles, searing chemical smoke. My lungs still hurt.

Fleshies played a show in lower Manhattan Saturday night, half a mile from the ex-World Trade Center. It seemed that people needed some escape, a chance to drink, dance, go crazy, laugh. I couldn't just entertain, though, I never seem to be able to...

"All right! It's good to be back in Kosovo...Baghdad...Panama City...East Philadelphia...Cambodia...My Lai...Hiroshima..."

Outside, the streets were beginning to fill with cars again. Some people were driving cautiously, many were driving like assholes—cutting people off, almost hitting pedestrians, honking, screaming. Most of the assholes had prominent American flag displays in their windows or on their antennas.

I walked down Canal Street, a moth drawn to flame, trying to get as close to the smoldering ruins as I could. It was closed off about five blocks away, but people were grouped around the barricades taking pictures and hawking American flag merchandise. The smoke was like an active volcano. It stank of Jingoism and death. No people who could possibly be mistaken for being of Middle Eastern descent were in sight. I had to leave quickly. The newspapers screamed along the way: "WAR!" "THE BASTARDS!" "AMERICA UNDER ATTACK!"

On every phone booth, every pole, every bus stop, there were photocopied posters of missing people. "Robert ***, 2nd tower, 85th floor, ***+Co. If you have any information, call 212-***-****" "Melissa ***, age: 2. Secretary, *** Inc. 1st tower, 98th floor. Please call home." A car radio blared with George Bush's words, "We will bring down the hammer. And it is a very big hammer."

I felt very sick.

3,000 people died last Tuesday in the most effective attack on America's military and economic infrastructure since the Civil War. 3,000 mostly working- and middle-class people. Secretaries, janitors, kitchen workers, middle-management drones. Insurance brokers. *Maybe* a few CEOs. *Maybe* a few genuinely shitty people, people who go beyond being merely an excessive consumer, people who actively help to keep America a nasty, violent, wasteful nation. But not many.

Mostly, it was people like me or my friends who may or may not have "sold out," but are still often my friends. Maybe there were a few of the nasty people in the part of the Pentagon that was destroyed, but of course we all know that the really important ones were deep in the basements and remote bases, hidden safely away. Who got the axe? More secretaries and administrative assistants. Now the nasties will hole up even more.

Why was it so effective? Ask the nearest flag-waver, the nearest red-blooded Amerikkkan screaming for every "Sand Nigger's" head on a platter. They are doing the bidding of a group of reactionaries who *only* understand violence and retribution, a group who, to some degree, speaks for millions of people around the world. These reactionaries know these ways, and these ways only, because we taught them. We taught them everything they know. And the more we react back, like a giant schoolyard bully who just got sucker punched in the hallway, the more they will grow, and the worse they will get.

You can only shit in someone's mouth for so long before they pull it out and smear it right back in your face.

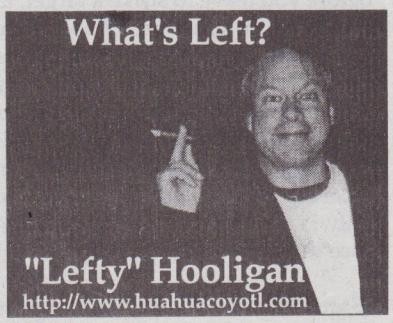
I'm scared *of* these reactionaries. I'm scared of extreme Islamic fundamentalism, I'm scared of the US government and that fucking cowboy we have in the White House, I'm scared of the rednecks with bloodlust in their eyes and intolerance in their veins. I'm scared *for* anyone not white in the USA, I'm scared for anyone who thinks critically and resists the strictures of American consumerism and death culture; I'm scared for those long-exploited countries in the third world who we're about to slap with our big dick *again*; I'm scared for anyone caught in between these groups of exploding nationalist religious shitbags—the secretaries, the middle managers, the firemen...And when I fear enough, it turns to hatred and anger, and I begin to feel awfully reactionary myself. I think a lot of people feel like me.

Today, when we tried (unsuccessfully) to cross the border into Canada, a Lebanese family was trying to get across at the same time. "Wait a minute," the Canadian customs agent said, "You want to get into Canada so you can get a direct flight to *Beirut* for asylum?!?" Yes, said the graying, middle-aged father of three young and hyper kids, "I want to take my children someplace safe."

Things are going to get very ugly. Be careful—watch what you sign up for, and above all: take care of each other. As for me, I'm sick of this planet. I'm moving to Mars.

[Things are indeed uglier, and I'm still not on Mars. Yet.]

—Alfred E. Qaida, PO Box 3026, Oakland, CA 94609,. johngeek@hotmail.com



Dedicated to Sherman Austin

MOLOTOV COCKTAIL DIY

This is information, pure and simple, intended solely to educate and perhaps to enlighten. I'm providing this information to the readers of *Maximum RocknRoll* in the spirit of the free exchange of ideas, free speech, freedom of information, yada yada yada. Of course I wouldnít want, and I certainly

don't expect any of you to do anything illegal with this information.

THE NAME
This simple explosive device was named after Mikhailovich Vyacheslav Molotov, a prominent commie and among other things vice premier of the Soviet Union. Remember the Soviet Union? An extremely cheap, quickly manufactured street weapon, the Molotov cocktail gained its moniker from its use by Finnish troops against the invading Soviet Red Armyís tanks during the Second World War. To site the on-line Wikipedia: "Molotov cocktails were even mass-produced by the Finnish military, bundled with matches to light them." It has come to be associated since with guerrilla warfare and urban riots. The three basic elements of a Molotov cocktail are a glass bottle filled with a flammable liquid ignited from a burning rag stuffed in the mouth of the bottle. When the bottle is thrown, it shatters on impact, spilling flaming liquid over the target.

THE BOTTLE
The romantic image of French resistance fighters making mollies out of wine bottles to do battle with the Nazis is the stuff of Hollywood movies, and not very useful. French wine bottles are heavy, hard to break, and limited in their capacity. Bottles that are lighter, made of cheaper breakable glass, and larger are better. Of course, there are limits. Mollies made from gallon rotgut wine jugs are definitely hard to throw, and mollies made from Mickeyís Big Mouth bottles are likely as not to explode in your hand. If the only thing available is an empty bottle of 1855 Chateau Lafite Rothschild, adding a layer of sand or gravel to cover the bottom of the bottle can insure it breaks on impact.

THE FUEL
Gasoline is the standard, though alcohol or kerosene can be used in a pinch. Tar can be added to make the burning liquid stick to the target. Ground-up Styrofoam added to regular gasoline produces the same effect. If white (unleaded) gasoline is used, soap flakes can produce a napalm-like gel. Acid added to a mollie increases the damaging potential of the burning liquid, and increases the chances for the mollie to penetrate fire-resistant surfaces as well.

THE RAG
A cloth rag, or a tampon work just fine. And here I leave it to the experts, namely Abbie Hoffman from *Steal This Book*: "Throwing, although by far not the safest method, is sometimes necessary. The classic technique of stuffing a rag in the neck of a bottle, lighting and tossing is foolish. Often gas fumes escape from the bottle and the mixture ignites too soon, endangering the thrower. If you're into throwing, the following is a much safer method: Once the mixture is prepared and inside the bottle, cap it tightly using the original cap or a suitable cork. Then wash the bottle off with rubbing alcohol and wipe it clean. Just before you leave to strike a target, take a strip of rag or a tampax and dip it in gasoline. Wrap this fuse in a small plastic baggie and attach the whole thing to the neck of the capped bottle with the aid of several rubber bands. When you are ready to toss, use a lighter to ignite the baggie. Pull back your arm and fling it as soon as the tampax catches fire. This is a very safe method if followed to the letter." Abbieís assumption is that the thrower is wearing gloves, because later he writes: "The alcohol wipe not only is a safety factor, but it eliminates tell-tale fingerprints in case the Molotov doesn't ignite.î

(*Steal This Book* has been reprinted by Four Walls, Eight Windows (39 West 14th Street, Room 503, New York, NY 10011).)

I've never made or thrown a mollie, though I've been to plenty of demonstrations thick with the cloying smell of gasoline. Personally, I consider Molotovs rather stupid, indiscriminant weapons. Giving out information about how to make a Molotov however is not the same thing as making one, or advocating that others make one. Sherman Austin has been railroaded in this current hysterical climate of national security and scoundrel patriotism. Itís time for a regime change in this country.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... You can find the "lost" Hooligan column at the new, improved http://www.huahuacoyotl.com. To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (PO Box 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimaô, 01534-030, Sáo Paulo-SP, Brasil) I can be contacted at hooligan3@mindspring.com.

Love... Exciting and Gnu

So, she came back to Long Island. One final weekend jaunt of fucked up punk rock love and spray paint debauchery before she headed cross-country. Lauren Anarchy: the zine-slinging, coffee-chugging, super-sexy anarchist. She was right here in East Setauket again, waiting outside the Stop and Shop for me.

I'll tell you, it's like fucking magic every time she comes here. Punk just comes alive. For me, punk is usually relegated to the boxes of records in my room, stacks of letters from pen pals, and my unrelenting obsession with KRUPTED PEASANT FARMERZ. It's a personal thing that has little to do with the outside world. But Lauren comes to town like a fucking atom bomb and injects punk into the whole place. The fucking Home Depot on Route 347 was fucking punk this weekend. Shithouse, bro.

So yeah, she had come back a few times between that first night and this weekend; most notably for the party of the fucking century. Our pal Kathy was selling her parents' house and wanted a last chance at merrymaking on the half-acre. There must have been about 300 kids there. It was fucking sick. I don't remember much, but there are some hazy highlights. I remember winding up as the disc jockey and spinning ULTRAMAGNETIC MCs, scratching along to GRANDMASTER FLASH AND THE FURIOUS FIVE, and getting the fucking party grinding to LOOP TROOP. I must have spent about two hours talking life with Ryan from SOLIDARITY PACT. I poured (or maybe spit) a ton of beer on the legendary Jon Ellis. I even stared a kid down because I wanted to fight him! Lauren and I almost broke Kathy's nose with a slamming door when she tried to enter the room where we were making out. I went kayaking in a pool and found an empty bottle of Jim Beam in a tree. It was a fucking party. But shit, that's a whole different story.

Lauren Anarchy. Fuckin' a. She was standing outside Stop and Shop looking bored. I had just enough time before she saw me to worry about the fact that this visit might not live up to the past ones. I honked and she hopped in my vehicle. She had a flower in her hair that she had picked off a display in the store. She had one for me too, and stuck it in my blue hat with the LIFETIME patch.

Erring on the side of caution, we headed back to my uncle's place to listen to records and make out. I guess the reasoning was to stick with what worked. We wound up trying to make a mix tape. It was one of those mix tapes that just fucking killed you. It had nothing but mint songs, but somehow was this

mercilessly boring march of wasted time. Early on it became clear that I wasn't a good team player when it came to mix tapes. Lauren dubbed the tape "The Battle for Veto Power Mix." We thumbed through 7"s and pulled out tons of awesome shit. Despite rad songs from RIGHT TURN CLYDE (that song "Rebel Base" from the split with THE PHUZZ is just so fucking mint), PUNKY ROCKET, THE THUMBS, PHALLOCRACY, and the mighty SWALLOWING SHIT, this mix was just sucking ass.

Eventually, after enough of my complaining, the mix was finally aborted at about the 35-minute mark. It didn't take much brainstorming about the pending night's activities before we wound up with vandalism. Stencils. Word. I had some UPS Next Day Air envelopes at my office we could cut up, so we picked those up and headed to Home Depot. We had a mischievous-looking shopping list that included two Xacto knives and four cans of spray paint.

So, we got there at about 8 or 9 pm. Those fucking Home Depots are open 24 hours around here. It's crazy. Anyway, after wandering around like idiots, we finally found the Xacto knives. They were locked up in a case behind a menacing looking overweight guy with an orange apron. I politely asked for two Xacto knives. He smiled and asked me if I needed one for each wrist. It was funny. I laughed and said yeah. After he handed them to us, Lauren and me kind of realized what a fucking strange thing that was to say. I thought about what Luke Wilson looked like in *The Royal Tennenbaums* after he slit his wrists all up. Still, the fact that the Home Depot guy had a sense of humor dark and dry enough to pass off suicide jokes to strangers was still pretty neat.

We headed for the paint aisle. On the way over we ran into Dave, who runs Punk Core Records here on Long Island. He had red laces in his Doc Martens, so I called him a pinko commie. We said goodbye to him and tried to collect the cheapest black, red, and silver spray paint we could find. With Xacto knives and spray paint in hand I passed a great big office workstation desk at which I stopped and marveled. The irony wasn't lost on either Lauren or me. I was a pretty successful businessman who had thing for yuppie furniture on a vandalism-supply buying spree. Weird.

At check out I had to show my ID. Great, two dirtbags at Home Depot—after dark—buying the only two products in the fucking place that require a drivers' license. Fuck.

After leaving the ol' Depot, we headed straight back home to cut out our stencils. Pretty quickly Lauren came up a pretty fucking cool idea. She drew out a nice-looking machine gun on top of the word "Piece," then she added a peace symbol. Funny, ironic, and punk; it was cool. She started cutting, as I floundered trying to come up with something at least as cool as hers. I had nothing. She was done with the barrel of her gun by the time I gave up and started on my "Free Dignan" stencil. A hokey reference to the movie *Bottle Rocket*, and really not all that clever, it was the best I could do. I suck.

So with a backpack full of spray paint and stencils we trudged down to the bar where my brother was slinging sauce that night.

"Two bottles of Bud and two shots of whiskey please," I said, "and maybe a couple for the bartenders, too?"

My brother got the Buds and poured four shots. The other bartender, Jimbo, did a shot with us. He had walked the same 16 feet of shitty bar with my father a couple of decades earlier. The shot of Jameson went down pretty smoothly. It gave rise to thought that if whiskey is this easy to drink, maybe I drink too much whiskey.

"Can we have two more shots?" asked Lauren.

Jesus. Lauren meant business. We did two more shots of Jameson, and she was at it again. It was another 20 seconds and our third shots of Jameson hit the bar. I was halfway through my beer and my head was fucking spinning. All the booze drinking aroused interest from my brother.

"What are you guys up to tonight?" he asked, with equal parts amusement and concern.

I shifted my eyes over to Lauren, and then around the bar. I pulled my self up off the bar stool and leaned over the bar until I was about 8 or 9 inches from my brothers face. Then I shifted my eyes back to him.

"Nothing," I said, "what about you?"

I think he called me an asshole or something. Another couple beers and maybe some shots later, we stumbled out the door on to the street. The booze had numbed my inhibitions and fear, but it hadn't done shit to deaden the knowledge that "Free Dignan" was a fucking limp idea for a stencil.

We walked around and "got up." We skulked past the bank where I have my record label account, trying to avoid lights and cameras. We found a dark corner and made out some more. Our shitted-up spray paint hands were all pawing and grabbing in that booze-induced romantic way. We sobered up a bit and beat it for home.

By the time we rolled up on my uncle's residence, we were pretty straight. We decided to head back to my parents' house, which was empty for the night. Back in my car, we hit the radio up. I had an almost indescribable hankering for PINK LINCOLNS. Luckily, I had *Back From The Pink Room* in my car. Lauren and I sat there listening to "I've Got My Tie On," with the car off. As we pulled away the song ended. I rewound it and started it up again, this time louder. Not only did that song never sound so good in my life, I don't think any song ever sounded that good in the history of life. Sitting in that car with Lauren listening—and just living the song—"I've Got My Tie On," was probably the single best part of the whole weekend. Fucking PINK LINCOLNS. It was so loud and so fucking awesome. Shit yeah.

So we staggered in past my parents' yippee fucking dog and collapsed in their bedroom. I took a piss and banged the lights off. It had to be like 3 in the morning or something. Maybe later, I don't know.

My parents' bed is this gigantic soft pillow-world kind of place. It was rad. We were laying there, in the dark, you know, making out. It was mint. Then, we had sex... scratch that; we *made love*, right in my parents' bed. So fucking mint, it was. I felt like Anthony in *Bottle Rocket* when he's talking to Inez through Rocky the translator. "Inez, when we had sex this afternoon... It was fun." I don't know, I'm paraphrasing, but you get the idea. It was mint.

Before I knew it, I was waking up the next day. We were hung over and happy as hell. We had about 8 or 10 hours to wrap-up our romance before she hit the road cross country, not to be back for a year or more. We made smoothies, made out some more, ditched the rest of Kathy's crap at her storage space, and worked on my zine. We hit the Heritage Diner so I could get some eggs and Lauren could guzzle down some coffee.

As it crept towards 9 pm, the looming goodbye started to weigh on us. There was some talk of us settling down, but that was mostly hooey—and wishful thinking. We pasted up the last few pages of my zine and said our goodbyes. After some hugging and kissing, she wanted me to promise to finish the mix we started. She pulled away in her parents' Subaru with the Pennsylvania plates, and I thought about how fucking mint Lauren Anarchy was. I also thought about how shitty that mix turned out and how I wasn't going to fucking touch that thing. Well, at least till Lauren turns up again.

Fuck CD-Rs, Mix Tapes Own!

So, the mysterious dude who sent me that killer mix tape turns out to be Adam Jennings from Chicago. He does what looks like a great fucking tape label and distro specializing in grind, death metal, crust, noise, doom, and other extreme shit. I checked the site out at http://geocities.com/mylaiproductions,

and was thoroughly impressed with the wide selection of sick shit. The dude signed off his second letter with the phrase, "fuck CD-Rs, mix tapes own!" You have to respect a man who drops language like that.

Misery Loves Company

I ditched my old job and company for greener pastures. I sold my shares and started shit up with my pal Beaker from THE DEVIL HIMSELF band here on Long Island. I've been fucking stressed out and fucked, but working super-hard. Our company handles CD replication, DVD manufacturing, enhanced CD-ROM programming, DVD authoring, web design shit, and audio mastering. I'd love to hook up *MaximumRockNRoll* readers with deals, so get in touch with me via e-mail if you looking for that kind of shit. Wish my ass luck!

My Name Is Lubrano is done! It's a collection of the first 15 columns I did for *MaximumRockNRoll*. It's like 75 pages long and has all the columns plus shitty punk layouts and pictures of stuff like MANOWAR, Lubrano, Fran Drescher, Beaker, pills, MINUTEMEN, traffic, record pressing machinery, prosthetic forearms, and much more. It's available on a sliding scale price of $3-$6 ppd. directly from me at the address below.

Well, my name's Dignan, man: Wells Tipley, PO Box 772, East Setauket, NY, 11733 USA. Or e-mail me at manowells@hotmail.com.

END NOTES:

1. In a further erosion of any punk cred I may have had (but probably didn't), I'd like to admit that I've been listening to nothing but FLAMING LIPS for weeks.
2. The Heritage Diner, or anything with the word heritage in the title, always makes me think of white power shit. Why is that? I guess it's the Heritage Front, or whatever. But Jeez, now I can't even get eggs without feeling like I'm nazi.
3. Attention authorities: The story above was inspired by some graffiti I saw on the road. It's not real. I don't do the graffiti.
4. Attention punkers: Punk as fuck and skateboarding rules!

Nearly 70 percent of Americans tell *Newsweek* that "the United States will be bogged down in [Iraq] for years without achieving its goals." Yet 61 percent tell *the same poll* that invading Iraq was the right thing to do. The reason for this weird disconnect: people think that we're in Iraq to spread democracy and rebuild the Middle East. They think we're The Good Guys. But the longer we keep patting ourselves on the back, the more we tell ourselves that the Iraqi resistance is a bunch of evil freedom-haters, the deeper we'll sink into this obscene quagmire.

It's time to get real.

In war, the side that most accurately sizes up the situation ultimately prevails. In this war in Iraq, our leaders thought the fall of Baghdad meant the end of the conflict. "Mission accomplished," as the banner behind George W. Bush read on the aircraft carrier. But Saddam understood the truth: the war began with the *occupation*. Guerilla warfare offered the only way for Iraq's tiny, poorly armed military to resist the US. The Baath Party planned to provoke US occupation forces into mistreating the population.

It worked.

Random bombings and sniper hits have made the American occupiers jittery and paranoid. They've withdrawn into fortified cantonments where they've cut off contact with civilians. Their ignorance causes them to offend Iraqi cultural and religious sensibilities. Even better, from Saddam's perspective, US troops push people around: shooting unarmed motorists, stealing their money and jewelry at roadblocks, breaking into houses in the middle of the night, manhandling wives and daughters, putting bags over men's heads and carrying them off to God knows where for who knows how long.

"US troops put their boots on the back of men's heads as they lay face down, forcing their foreheads to the ground," the Associated Press' Scheherezade Faramarzi writes about the procedure used by US troops during sweeps. "There is no greater humiliation…because Islam forbids putting the forehead on the ground except in prayer." Amnesty International says the US subjects Iraqi prisoners to "cruel, inhuman, or degrading" conditions.

In Iraq, we are the bad guys.

What about the "terrorists" who bombed the UN headquarters and Jordanian embassy in Baghdad, who sabotage oil and water pipelines, who use rifles and rocket-propelled grenades and remote-controlled mines to kill our soldiers? Aren't these "killers" evil, "killing people who just want to help," as another AP writer puts it?

In short: no.

The ad hoc Iraqi resistance is comprised of indigenous fighters ranging from secular ex-Republican Guards to radical Islamist Shiites, as well as foreign Arab volunteers waging the same brand of come-one-come-all jihad that the *mujahedeen* fought against Soviet occupation forces in Afghanistan. While one can dismiss foreign jihadis as naïve adventurers, honest Americans should call native Iraqi resistance fighters by a more fitting name: Iraqi patriots.

I collect propaganda posters. One of my favorites, from World War II, depicts a strapping young SS officer holding a smiling local kid in his arms. "Trust the German soldier," the caption exhorts citizens of occupied France. But when liberation came in 1945, Frenchmen who had obeyed that poster were shot as collaborators. The men and women who resisted—the "terrorists" who shot German soldiers, cut phone lines, and bombed trains—received medals and pensions. Invaders always say that they come as liberators, but it's almost never true. Whether you live in Paris or Baghdad or New York, you're expected to know that, and to act accordingly.

"We want deeds, not words," says Abu Mohammad, a retired teacher about our inability (unwillingness?) to restore basic services to the city of Baghdad. Here are our deeds: Talking about democracy as we cancel elections. Guarding the oil ministry building while museums are sacked. Exporting Iraqi oil to Turkey as Iraqis suffer fuel and power shortages. Iraq's natural resources are being raped. Its people are being murdered. Yet it's the patriotic Iraqi resistance, which is trying to stop these outrages by throwing out the perpetrators of an illegal war of aggression, that the Bush Administration dares call "terrorists."

On July 5 a bomb killed seven recruits for a US-trained Iraqi police force in Ramadi. US occupation administrator Paul Bremer deplored the murder of "innocent Iraqis." Cops who work for a foreign army of occupation are not innocent. They are collaborators. Traitors. They had it coming.

Under George W. Bush, truth and justice are no longer the American way. The US occupation of Iraq is misguided, evil and doomed to failure. The sooner we accept this difficult truth, the sooner we decide to stop being the bad guys, the sooner we'll withdraw our troops. The bloodshed may continue after we leave—and we'll be partly to blame for that. But until we pull out, the carnage is *all* ours.

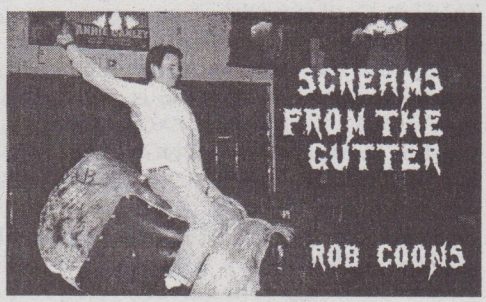
Sami Tuma's brother was shot to death when he drove past a US military checkpoint. (The psychotic US military policy in Iraq, despite countless killings of innocent civilians and at least five reporters to date, is not to warn victims before opening

fire.) "It is simple," says Tuma. "If someone kills your son, wife, or brother without any reason but only that they happen to be walking or driving in the street, what you will do? You retaliate."

It's what I'd do. It's probably what you'd do too.

NEW PAPERBACK: My 140-page book *To Afghanistan and Back* is finally out in paperback form. *Afghanistan* contains a 50-page graphic novella (long comic) about my experiences dodging bombs and bullets during the US invasion of Afghanistan, as well as a dozen articles I filed from the war zone. The new paperback is also updated and revised with an additional chapter discussing media coverage of the war, and it's just $9.95.

P.S. Due to a bureaucratic fuck-up at my post office, mail from my PO Box is getting bounced back. Sorry if this happened to you—it wasn't my fault! Anyway, I'm working on getting a new box and will post it soon at the end of my column. In the meantime send email to ted@rall.com.



Damn, I know that I am a month behind on this, but that is what happens when you do a bi-monthly column. Anyway, I just wanted to mention the passing of three of the members of the EXPLODING HEARTS and how much that truly bummed me out. Had I never seen them live before, maybe it would have hit me a bit differently. But I had just seen them here in San Francisco, just a few days before the tragic accident. As you can imagine, that added a face and personality to the band, and intensified the loss for me and many others that were in attendance that night. You could tell they were having a great time up on stage and with all the hype surrounding a string of great releases, they were really starting to break into the spotlight. Fuck, what a tragic loss for the punk scene!

And with that said, it really bums me out that we lose a great band like that, and yet bands like DISCHARGE and the DEAD KENNEDYS will not go away no matter how much we ignore them. As most of you know, DISCHARGE is touring the US as I type this. That's right, kids, believe your eyes! But wait, it gets worse. Their singer, Cal, couldn't even be bothered to go out and tour, refusing to play live again. So instead of hanging up the spikes and chains, they recruit Rat from the VARUKERS for vocal duties and basically embarrass everybody involved. I guess I just don't get it. And the saddest part of it all is that young kids who don't know any better will just eat this shit up. All I can think is, why fucking bother?

And while we are on the subject of lame bands that have re-formed without their singers, don't even get me started on the DEAD KENNEDYS. Regardless of what mismanagement Jello and Alternative Tentacles did or did not do, the rest of you fuckers need to get over this hopeless cash cow and try to get on with your normal lives. I know that they just had their 25th anniversary show down in Los Angeles (combined with their meet and greet/record-signing event at Tower Records the day before). Maybe if the latest guy doing vocals comes to his senses, he will bail on the band as well. Then maybe they can get Perry Farrell or Michael Stipe to do some vocal duties. Fucking pull out the barf bag Wilma, I think I am going to hurl.

TEEN CTHULHU / WORMWOOD - split EP: Whoa, let's hear it for some maddening metalcore from the Northwest. TEEN CTHULHU, who have broken up, toss down a heavy mix of metal/hardcore and keyboard-fueled black metal riffs. It is all here, from fast blasts to slow doomy parts. There are a few distinct vocals styles at play here, ranging from deep crusty growls to throat-shredding, higher pitched screams. I really dug them and you should too. WORMWOOD starts their side off with some dark spooky intro that immediately made me think of NEUROSIS. And then the music kicked in and it sort of lost me from there. It seems like it should work...two rumbling bass players, growling vocals, slow moody music, keyboards...but in the end the sum didn't equal the parts. Worth checking out for the TEEN CTHULHU side—and it should be noted that this is a picture disc limited to 550 copies. (Accident Prone, PO Box 460686, Escondido, CA 92046; accidentprone.com)

RAMMER – "Suffer" LP: Hahaha! When was the last time you saw a band posing with a 1970s Pontiac Firebird on the back of a record cover? OK, so these guys have proved they like *Smokey and the Bandit*, but can they actually rock the tunes? Well after listening to all four tracks, I would have to say this is quite worthy of a hangbang or two. From what I have read, RAMMER contains members from URANUS, CHOKEHOLD, and LEFT FOR DEAD. But after listening to this all-out metal assault with lots of galloping riffage, guitar solos, and harsh throaty vocals, I find it all to be a little surprising. Bring on the Nike hightops and blue jean vests—these guys have been listening to way too much AT THE GATES and IRON MAIDEN. All I know is that they need to do a tour with BOULDER immediately! (Slasher, 2 Stewart St., Toronto, Ontario, M5V 1H6, CANADA; slasher-records.com)

ANGSTZUSTAND – "Malen Nach Zahlen" LP: Sometimes harsh, rumbling hardcore from Germany may be just what the doctor ordered. In this case, this release almost hit that spot. ANGSTZUSTAND take a collage of styles and melt them all together, making for an appealing release. They take elements of hardcore, metal, and emo, along with some rumbling bass lines and sharp-edged guitar riffs, and create a very enjoyable listen. Most of this is mid-tempo, and the thing that stood out to me was the way much of this kept an edge of mellowness and melody, while remaining brutal and aggressive at the same time. Worth a listen for sure. (Narshardaa, c/o Springer, Wollbergsredder 9, 24113 Molfsee, GERMANY; narshardaa.com)

SCROG – "Discography" CD: You know, I have seen SCROG records for many years and I honestly don't think I have ever gave them a listen once. Well, that all changed after working my way through this 19 song discography. SCROG takes a heavy dose of MELVINS guitar-driven crunch and piles on some ear-searing vocals that howl and screech like there is no tomorrow. Yet there are these occasional mellower parts that almost have a dark gothic edge to them (I can almost feel the band cringing at that description). Regardless, I am glad I finally got to hear SCROG in action. As far as I know, this Florida band is long gone, but with the rate of bands reforming these days, who knows? (New Granada, PO Box 291044, Tampa, FL 33687; newgranada.com)

OUR TURN – "Step Aside" demo: Yep, that is right. My fellow columnist/reviewer Carl Cordova's new band has finally released their first demo. There are no surprises here. Total straightedge hardcore that is not afraid to wear the influences of bands like UNITY and YOUTH OF TODAY all over their sleeves (note that there is a UNITY cover on here). Needless to say, this is quality finger-pointing hardcore. Sharp-edged guitar work leads the way, while there are enough breakdowns and shouted backing vocals to keep any circle pit or dogpile going. My favorite song was definitely *Whose Turn?* especially with that GRUDGE ripoff at the beginning. It can only be a matter of time before their first release comes out and they start playing all over California. The kids are going to eat this shit up for sure! ($3 ppd: Neck, 746 Baker St., San Francisco, CA

94115; ih8thekids@hotmail.com)

OVERMARS / FUGUE – split CD: Ah yes, OVERMARS. I seem to remember reviewing a split CD with them and DONEFOR just a few months ago. And here we go again. Not much has changed with their style as they are still going for those extremely long songs that combine mellow "atmospheric" moments that suddenly break into a wall of guitars and repetitive rhythms ground up with coarse, angry vocals. Very ISIS and NEUROSIS influenced. FUGUE goes down a very similar musical path, except they are just a bit more aggressive and abrasive. This would be a worthwhile investment if this style of music were your thing. (Waiting For An Angel, 45 Rue Rachais, 69007 Lyon, FRANCE; waitingforanangel.com)

HAWG JAW – "Don't Trust Nobody" CDR: Oh yeah, good ol' HAWG JAW from New Orleans is at it again. Here are eight more tracks of raging tunes from the South. They have stuck with that slow to mid-tempo riff-heavy attack that that sounds as aggressive and angry as ever. They definitely have some dark, dirty, and distorted New Orleans influences going on here, as well as bringing to mind another Southern powerhouse that goes by the name of CAVITY. The vocals on here are scorching. A shredding mix of low guttural growls and larynx-shredding screams. HAWG JAW is a powerhouse of a band—too bad they will probably never play out here! These are unreleased tracks, but they have a couple of releases out there that you should definitely check out. (ghawg@bellsouth.net)

OUTLAW ORDER – "Legalize Crime" CDR: Damn, I heard this CDR a while ago and I just got a second copy, so I figured I better get on it and give these folks some press. OUTLAW ORDER is yet another New Orleans/EYEHATEGOD offshoot, and it definitely is apparent in these four tracks. Hostile, bitter, pulverizing, bleak, ornery...these are just a few of the words that come to mind listening to these songs. They pound their way through the sludge and gloom with buzzing guitars and desperate angry vocals. On a rare occasion things are sped up and pretty aggressive, but make no mistake, this sounds pretty much like EYEHATEGOD. And considering that I own almost every release that EYEHATEGOD ever put out, this is an excellent thing in my book. By the way, a few of these tracks are coming out on a Southern Lord release, so be on the lookout for that. (ghawg@bellsouth.net)

FORGARDUR HELVITIS – Gerningaveour CD & demo CDR: Whoa! Was I ever in for a surprise when a package from Iceland showed up in my PO Box. And these were the first two releases I listened to. From what I can gather, this band has been around for many years, but due to their geographical location they haven't really been noticed. Well let me tell you, after listening to these releases I can highly recommend checking them out. FORGARDUR HELVITIS blazes through some crazy grind/death metal. Insanely fast blast beats take the lead, but there are a variety of tempos at work here making for an engaging listen. The guitarist goes ballistic with some frantic riffs, as the drummer tirelessly pounds away at the skins. The production is really heavy and loud. Needless to say, this is an exceptional release! The stuff on the demo CDR is obviously very similar to the full-length, except it is much more raw and unpolished. But hey that is what a demo is all about right? Check this band out. (Siggi, Baronsstigur 57, 101 Reykjavik, ICELAND; punknurse@helviti.com)

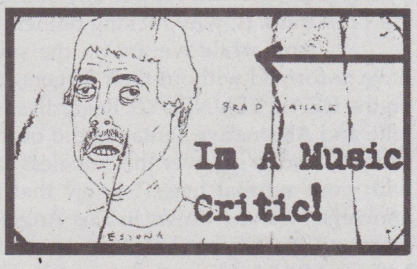
DYS – "Island Brennur" CD: Nope, it is not *that* DYS! This is a DYS from Iceland, with the vocalist from FORGARDUR HELVITIS (see other review) also fronting this band. One thing is for sure; the styles of these two bands are drastically different. DYS, which means "unmarked shallow grave" in Icelandic, cranks through 11 songs of punk-edged rock 'n' roll. Mid-tempo yet hard-driving rhythms, harsh, hollow vocals...a few of the songs really pick it up and go...but not to far. And then towards the end, the RUDIMENTARY PENI cover rears its ugly head and things suddenly become a bit clearer. Not to say that is what they sound like, because DYS is a lot more aggressive than that. But once I heard that, some of those influences started to shine through. Maybe some later-era BLACK FLAG mixed with a little MURDER SUICIDE PACT. (Siggi, Baronsstigur 57, 101 Reykjavik, ICELAND; punknurse@helviti.com)

HRAFNAPING – "Likio Var Dautt" demo CDR: Damn, I don't hear releases from Iceland very often, and yet here I am listening to the fourth one in a row (thanks to Siggi)! And once again this is a difficult to pin down musically. HRAFNAPING crunches together a variety of different styles of metal. A little thrash, a little Swedish, a little rock, and a little roll all pull together nicely. Lots of galloping drumming, chunky guitar riffs, and rumbling bass lines combine with a variety of vocals styles (from snotty to hard and aggressive) complement the mix of styles. There is really nothing mind-blowing here, but it's definitely an intriguing listen. (Siggi, Baronsstigur 57, 101 Reykjavik, ICELAND; punknurse@helviti.com)

V/A – *A Reason For Living* 2003 triple LP: Holy crap! The Holy Grail of modern Japanese compilations now has a part two. (If anybody wants to part with the first *A Reason For Living* compilation that came out a few years ago, please contact me!) This time around the line-up is as strong as ever. VIVISICK, HISATAKA, CURIOSO, EXCLAIM, ORGANIZED IDEA, SCARECROW, FLAME, CONGA FURY, HURRICANE, SPEND 4, FASTCUT JUNK BRIGADE, MILK COFFEE, NADA CAMBIA, VIOLENT PARTY, APPETITE COUNTY, HOPELESS, OUTNAUTS, CHARM, U SPAN D, DEADLY FRIEND, SET OFF, GODFREE HO, CROW DRAGON TEA, GREEN, WE MUST BURN, FUCK ON THE BEACH, WHO AM I, THE SPROUTS, FREAKS, CHAOTIX, NO THINK and REAL REGGAE. Do I really need to describe most of the bands to you? Prepare for lots of fast, fast, and faster. But there is definitely a mix of musical styles that strays far from the fast and thrash (but not too far, of course) Good luck on tracking this gem down. (Dan Doh, 2-1-26, Honmachi, Kochi-City 780-0870 Japan)

As always, thanks for reading this psychobabble. Please note I have a NEW ADDRESS, which is PO Box 78424, San Francisco, CA 94107. And as always please send in your grind, crust, metal, thrash, and hardcore releases for review. Or shoot me some love letters over the interweb at xgoatcorex@hotmail.com.

"Every day that I don't eat the gun, I won, I won... Every day that I don't fucking run, I won, I won... It's getting harder every day, but I still hang on... Every day that I don't kill someone, I won, I won... Every day that I don't succumb, I won, I won... It's getting harder every day, but I still hang on."
—Failure Face, "I Won"



Before I get to the reviews this month, I want to briefly discuss exploiting a resource that may be obvious to some but not to others. I see a lot of my friends who book shows running around meeting with various people who own halls, and making lots of phone calls struggling to find places to have all-ages shows that can be rented out at a cost at which you they could hope to break even. Having a regular place to have all-ages shows here in Boston has been a struggle for some time, and from what I can tell, it is often a struggle in many other cities.

Besides all the normal problems that come with trying to find a regular place for shows to happen, it seems that the cops and city licensing commissions are cracking down all over the place in light of the Rhode Island night club fire and efforts by Clear Channel to create licensing standards that only a wealthy company like themselves could meet. While it's always advisable to have as many venue options as possible, there is one great one that is overlooked by some, but utilized to great results by others. That option would be college campuses. Now certainly not everybody goes to college, whether you never had the opportunity, never wanted to, already graduated, or are still in high school. For those of you who are, though, you might be sitting on a myriad of resources. Now of course, every school is different, and each one will vary in how permissive they may be in terms of letting you do punk shows and how many resources will be available. When I was in college, we had a pretty good gig going with the school, where we a student organization was formed so students were able to get money from the student activity budget that directly went to putting on shows. They gave us about $3000 a semester because they thought we'd be bringing in one or two big bands that we'd have to pay a lot. Instead it was easy to put on ten punk/hardcore shows and use that money to pay for PA and other costs—then all the money from the door went to the bands.

I feel like I didn't even exploit the possibilities as much as other people I've met, who went to bigger schools and were able to get their hands on large amounts of money from the school budget with which they could put on shows. The money doesn't even matter though, a great benefit if you can get it, but more importantly is all the other things that a college campus has such as first and foremost buildings/spaces/rooms which you can have a show in that are well maintained and hopefully only under the scrutiny of campus police rather than real police and licensing commissions. Many schools will also have some sort of audio visual/media equipment room from which you could possibly get microphones, a PA, projectors, and lights. You should also be able to get free copies for flyers somewhere on campus finding out the codes for the machines or making a friend who has access to them. Sometimes there might be rental fees for some of these things, but if you're resourceful, you can work around them or find ways to make up cost elsewhere. A friend of mine who does shows at the University of Connecticut has to pay a hundred dollars to use a room he rents from another student organization, but he has his own PA and almost always has enough to pay the rental fee and the bands. In my opinion, by starting to do shows at his college, he was able to turn Connecticut into a place that has good shows almost every week, instead of a place that rarely, if ever, had good shows in recent memory. I've had other friends that had great success by putting on shows at their colleges, from small, 30-person shows, all the way up to huge shows with bands as big as Fugazi. All they had to do was take a little initiative, talk to various school officials, and play ball and fill out a little paperwork maybe. Even if you only take one class you can usually pull it off. It could greatly improve the DIY touring network if more people could pull this off. If you interested in more information about how to do this, get in touch, and I can try and help or hook you up with others that know how the game is played.

Black Eyes s/t LP A couple of months ago, a friend of mine sent me an email asking me if I could help him understand the popularity of Black Eyes. I neglected to write him back because I didn't have an answer, and not because I too was baffled by people's enthusiasm for the band, but because I had yet to hear them. I'd heard plenty of good things though, so I decided to pick it up. Shortly after putting the needle down on this record I realized I had an answer for my friend's question about why people were digging this band—the answer is because they are fucking great. It's rare that you get a record that upon first listen you are really excited about, but for me this was one of them. The record starts off with a rhythm and guitar noise reminiscent of stuff you might find on the last couple of Fugazi records. From there, though, the record never comes back to such an easily identifiable structure. Instead you get two drummers, sometimes two bassists, and one guitar, all creating dancy, yet noisy punk that is the backdrop for a vocal assault unique in delivery and content. I have trouble describing where these guys are musically because I find them to one of the more refreshing and inventive bands I've heard in a while. The best I can offer is that they incorporate some of the better elements of other Dischord counterparts such as Q And Not U, but with an even bigger dose of first wave post punk and art noise. If they were from NYC they'd probably be gaining the same accolades as bands like Liars or The Rapture. The vocals range from talk-singing to high pitched and snotty, and are some of the strongest elements of the record. When these guys scream it feels like they really mean it, but do it with such reckless abandon that it somehow feels like a celebration. Luckily, I got to catch these guys the other night. Unfortunately, one drummer was out of commission with a migraine, so they only played five songs with one drummer. Even at this minimal capacity, Black Eyes still blows most bands out of the water. I can't wait to see them at 100%. Possibly my new favorite band. Please send me more records like this. (www.dischord.com)

Death to Tyrants CDEP Not a bad little jam from these New Hampshire kids. Six instrumental tracks that work without vocals, but at times I could see having vocals. I think they manage to sit perfectly in the middle of that distinction by playing instrumental music that never becomes overly concerned with time signatures, and technical ability. Lots of intense soloing that shows they've got the skills but are also smart enough to know when it's appropriate to use them. Overall, this disc is pretty mellow, with jolting moments. I'm going to be a little over-the-top and say Saetia meets later Don Caballero, but by that I only mean that I could imagine these kids listening to a handful of post-rock bands but still wanting to play emo-hardcore. Packaging is nice too. Hand stamped digipack with one of those clear CDs. It would appear they kept it simple and cheap, but still managed something unique and appealing. I believe this is their first release, and it gets the thumbs up. I imagine future releases will only improve upon this solid base. (www.chernobylmedia.com)

Kaospilot s/t LP This record is a rager from beginning to end. From the moment you put the needle down, it's an all-out offensive on your ears, each song being another wave of attacks. Kaospilot is unrelenting in spirit and sound. There's almost nothing about this record I don't like. Kaospilot does owe a lot to JR Ewing and Union of Uranus for their sound, though, so maybe they lose a point in the originality category, but they fuse those styles so goddamn well it's hard to fault them. I'll give them the originality point back because they recorded this themselves, which is a noble endeavor that they pulled off quite well. Their recording is heavy, brutal, and chaotic, while still affording them details within their wall of sound. I don't know if this was intentional or just luck, but the vinyl is really heavy on this record—I wish all records came on vinyl this nice. I sincerely hope someone is looking into bringing these guys to the States sometime in the near future, as I can only assume from this record that they would kick ass live.
(www.level-plane.com)

Dead City / Funeral Diner split LP So I got the limited edition hand-numbered, hand-screened test pressing tour version of this record, so I'm psyched, right? Well yes, because I still like all

that about the packaging, but my record is a little warped, so the beginning of the Dead City side tends to skip a little bit. Luckily, I've seen Dead City three times, so I've heard the song and know what I'm missing, and what I'm missing is pretty good. Dead City starts and ends four songs with longer, epic songs, fueled by ethereal keyboard and driving guitar, drums, and bass. The two songs in between are an instrumental track and a song with a more traditional punk/hardcore feel and structure. I tend to like the longer epic songs the best, but Dead City do a good job mixing it up as even their more typical hardcore song has a heavy dose of rock 'n' roll to keep it fresh. Dead City has a lot of strength in diversity, and are unique in their fusion of hardcore and rock.

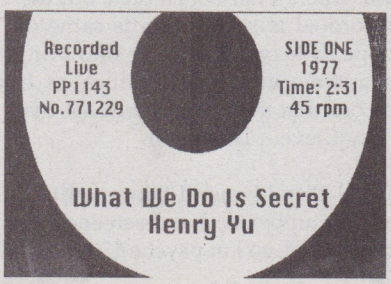
The last time I heard Funeral Diner they sounded a lot like Portraits of Past, but this time around they seemed to have moved past that and have developed more of a sound they can call their own. Many of their songs seem to work around light and pretty beginnings that kick start into a faster, more driving sound that eventually culminates in everything crashing down. I dig the vocals, and the singer does a good job of screaming with a lot of passion but still retaining enough character that I can sometimes understand what he's saying. Funeral Diner may be one of the best things the West Coast has going right now. It's important to note about this record, though, that it's the first in a benefit series from So Much to Give and Old Glory Records. The benefit is for some elementary schools in Memphis, and this record comes with a handful of inserts discussing the prevailing problems in Memphis school system and the education system in general. Personally I find it nice to get a record packed full of flyers and inserts, and find it to be a letdown to get records that have very little print content inside them. This was a good start for this series and split LPs from Yaphet Kotto / Seein Red and Tem Eyos Ki / Countdown to Putsch should be interesting pairings as well.

Textbook Traitors - *You Pull the Strings that Make Us Dance* CD I saw these guys play once. I thought they were pretty good, but their influences weighed a little to heavy on them. I still feel pretty much the same way. Like Kaospilot, Textbook Traitors is heavily influenced by bands like Union of Uranus and One Eyed God Prophecy, but throw in more Reversal of Man than JR Ewing for this record. Even with influences being obvious, they picked pretty good ones, and their execution of this particular branch of hardcore is done well. The six songs on this CD are all very similar and I think the Traitors could benefit from a little more diversity, but this is still a strong first release from this young band. My favorite moment is at the end of the last song when they throw in some rawer sounding distorted drums. If they can continue to create unique moments like this and put more of their own stamp on their sound, they could become a band to look out for. Nice screened packaging. Worth picking up if you're a fan of this style. (MagicBullet, PO Box 2370, Merrifield, VA 22116)

As always get in touch and send me records.
Brad Wallace 11, Royal St. #1, Allston, MA 02134. brw97@hampshire.edu

The Fall

The past month was spent driving the 7" part of my record collection from Portland to San Francisco, where I live. Fifteen boxes of skinny plastic. Having not lived with the stuff for a few years lessens its hold over you. It wasn't as if I had stopped collecting. However, the game of accumulation had become the itch, not the owning. I started to identify with how some of the collectors did it, those who continuously recycled their small collections, owning and then letting go of a rare record after they had somehow sucked the gestalt out of it. I always thought they had done it out of financial necessity, but later it seemed to make some sort of sense. The thrill of the hunt (aka "Search" button on eBay). The thrill of the find (post-PayPal interruptus). The feel in your hand, the weight, the plastic, the paper, its imperfections sparking imagination about its back-in-the-day history. The satisfaction of sealing it and its air up in a 4 mil plastic sarcophagus and filed neatly among its brethren. It pretty much ends there. An annual flip through and spin evokes the first set of emotions but on a logarithmically reduced scale. The power of ownership is not real. It could just as well sit it a friend's collection with visitation rights.



There's a guy who I met recently who accumulated records most of his life. He has burn scars on his arm. He told me the story of how his entire collection had burned in a fire. The toxic fumes from the melting vinyl filled his lungs and nearly killed him and even left him more or less comatose for a while. He had owned nothing else. No photos, no journals, no diaries, no other physical belongings in his life to mark the passage of time, emotion, life. It was all tied into the audio-physical history of his record accumulation-collection. The loss was traumatic for him.

So the boxes of records have been with me, lying under my bed. Their aura is left in the box. Their aura is left encased in the plastic sleeve. I hope they don't kill me.

Ever Pet a Llama? Or a Luma? Or a Lona?

After a heavy petting session which involved a friendly llama at a winery, My Girl Lona and I continued our drive through the North Bay of San Francisco and over to a place I had tried to visit several times before but somehow never quite got enough stick up the ass to ever make it to. Red Devil Records was known to me as having cred among the *MRR* crowd, as well as putting some pretty interesting gems up on eBay, including some FREESTONE flyers. Nestled in Petaluma, it's a bit of a drive out of San Francisco, and the town, quaint as fuck, seems unlikely and sleepy to be associated with anything remotely punk. However, there it was and is.

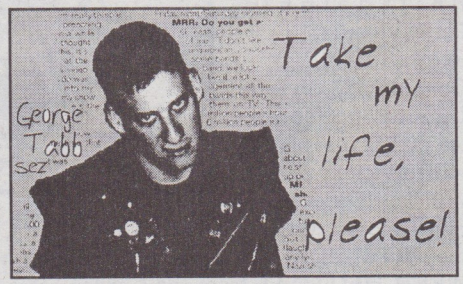
Barry Lazarus greeted us warmly at the door. "Did you call in earlier?" he asked. Barry is used to having San Franciscans call him for directions the last mile in. Red Devil specializes in punk collectibles and new punk singles, CDs, and records. Barry and his 50-lb now-I-wanna-be-your-lap-dog Herbie have had the place for about five years, and it is still going strong, with luminaries such as THE BRIEFS stopping by to do an in-store to pay homage to the place. Barry's love of punk extends to an interest into cool flyer art, with original framed stuff lining the walls. Best of all, his enthusiasm is off the scale. On our trip, he played so many great records for me that I spent all my milk money! Go visit and your punk rock life will mean something again. And don't forget to pet Herbie, too.

The Lone Record Review

On the new Skull Records label outta LA (www.peppydoe.com) comes a pretty good split 45 by THE FANTASTIC FIVE and THE MALCONTENTS. The comic-bookish pop punk picture sleeve belies the serious moodiness of these students of punk, each of whom contributes two good tracks. THE FANTASTIC FIVE take the A-side by storm with the dark and minimal but very grabbing "Hate To See You Go" ("Hate to see you go / Put my trigger on the gun says yes yes / Who am I to say no?") "American Wasteland" is their minor chord anthem. These guys have sophistication. THE MALCONTENTS purvey a slowed-up droney pop punk sound (imagine an American pop punk My Bloody Valentine) with their think-piece "Street Girl",

and then ending this perfect 4-tracker with a cover of WIRE's "The 15th," originally from their rarely explored *154* LP.

The new URINALS CD coming out on Danny Gromfin's Warning Label (the one that brought you the excellent ROMANS retrospective) will be out in October. Recently URINALS audio-spotting was on Public Radio's All Things Considered! They did a story about a Chinese domino master who was trying to break the world record, but kept getting sabotaged by cockroaches that knocked over sections of 8000-9000 dominos at a time. At the end of the segment, the URINALS' "I'm A Bug" was played. As always, email to terasearch@yahoo.com or frisbee fodder to Henry, 4309 23rd St., San Francisco, CA 94114.



So, there I was, searching through my hardwood, standard issue, dorm room desk, trying to find my knife. I had to hurry—he was gonna be back soon and I had to be prepared. As I looked through all the junk in the drawer, my heart began to beat faster and faster. Pencils, nope. Pens, nope. Ramones button, nice, but nope. Little black book, empty and nope. Condom, yeah right, like I'm gonna get to use it, nope. Roach Motel fliers, nice artwork, especially the aborted fetus in the bowl of fruit loops, nope. Guitar tuner, so, that is where it went. Now I'll be able to tune again. Nope. *Penthouse* magazine, wow, I think I can see her tonsils from between her legs, nope. Text books, never opened, nope. *Maximumrocknroll*, yuck, I'll get ink all over my hands. Nope. And then I found it. My knife. The knife that I was gonna finish this business with. The knife that I got when I was in the Cub Scouts, from Bobby McCollough's mother, who was our den leader. The knife I paid a whole dollar for, and had kept for many years, knowing one day it would come in very handy. As I took the blade out, I got my fingernail caught under it and cut myself. Now I was bleeding. And pissed. My heart began to beat even faster. I heard lots of regular dorm noise out in the hall, but didn't hear him yet. I mean, I heard the guys in the hall playing Frisbee, and knocking out the exit lights, the guys in the laundry room throwing up into the dryers, and the guys next door calling one another "fags." But he wasn't here yet. I looked in the standard issue, ugly square dorm room mirror and saw my reflection. There I was in my Bugs Bunny t-shirt with my leather jacket with the US pins, and my face and hands were all bloody. I guess I shouldn't have tried picking my nose. Then I heard his keys rattle, and saw the door knob turn. And then he walked in, saw me with the knife in my hand, and all the blood, and stopped dead in his tracks. "Oh my god, George," he said. "Fuck you Richard," I replied. "But we're roommates, for god's sakes, put down the knife," he exclaimed. "I warned you, motherfucker," I said, and raised the knife high above my head. "No, Jesus Christ, no!" exclaimed Richard, as I brought down the knife. But let me back up a bit.

College is supposed to be fun and educational. And for the most part, it is. Was. Whatever. I learned how to drink real good, and even got laid for the first time there. I learned a lot about the universe, the workings of the human body, the mind, and the human psyche. Whatever that is. But most of all, what I learned, is that roommates suck. They are all shitheads. And no matter how good a friend somebody is, if they live with you, you are gonna hate them. And they are gonna hate you. Especially if ya live in a dorm. And that dorm room is twelve feet by fourteen feet. And you have to see that person all the time. And have to sleep near them. And smell them. And listen to their shitty taste in music. Yeah, roommates suck. And somehow, I always got the worst ones.

My first semester at college I got stuck with this guy named Jim. His father was an imperial wizard for the Ku Klux Klan. He jerked off way too much, and was convinced that I was the son of Satan. Which I sorta am, but that's another story. Anyway, Jim, compared to my next roommate, Richard, seemed like a saint. Richard was the worst motherfucking roommate I ever had. And I had some bad ones. There was Jorge, who was at first my best friend, and I eventually asked him to be my roommate. He no longer was my best friend. In fact, we became bitter enemies. I remember one night, I was a bit cranky, which is pretty normal for me, especially after band rehearsal and two six packs of Black Label. I mean, that Black Label is shit. It is this really sweet beer, and gives ya the worst fucking headache. So, I come home from rehearsal, which meant that we may have actually played our instruments for like ten minutes, and the rest of the time was spent drinking and fighting, and me trying to tune my guitar. Anyway, Jorge is playing his favorite album, the Talking Heads *77* album, which I think is a stupid name for an album, I mean, who would name their album a number. Schmucks. So Jorge is blasting some lame song, and I start making fun of David Byrne, the singer of the band. I start singing "Disco Inferno," but I sing, "Burn, David Byrne" and he gets all pissed off. He tells me that the Talking Heads are the best band ever, and that the Ramones and Roach Motel suck. Now, he used to like the Ramones and Roach Motel, but I guess, after living with me, he hated them. But that was okay. Before I lived with him, I kinda liked the Talking Heads, but now I hated them. He played them day and night. So, as I was singing to him, he turned his stereo up louder. So I went over and turned on my stereo. And played a Ramones album. *Road to Ruin*. An album with a real name. And I turned it up loud. So he turned his stereo up louder. And I turned mine up louder. And he turned up his louder. And I turned mine up as far as it would go. But he turned his up louder. So I plugged in my guitar to my one hundred watt amp, and started to play it. Loud. He turned up his stereo louder. I turned up my guitar louder. He turned his stereo all the way up. I turned my amp all the way up. My guitar was louder. So he kicked me in the shins. I hit him with my guitar. We began to fight with our fists. Finally, some of the guys on the floor broke it up cause they couldn't take all the noise. They smashed my Ramones album and Jorge's Talking Heads album.

The next morning I woke up and Jorge was already at breakfast. Well, he had got breakfast, and was eating it in the lobby of the dorm, while watching *The Price is Right*. With Bob Barker. What kinda name is that. Barker. What, is he a fucking dog? And I hear he is for animal rights. What the hell is that. Like animals have rights. What, they should vote, be able to drive motor vehicles, and drink when they are twenty-one? So, I go to the lobby and see Jorge. I don't say anything to him as I walk by him, but under his breath he whispers "The Ramones and Roach Motel suck." Of course I punch him in the face, and he punches me in the face. Then we start to really brawl, and all the old ladies who work behind the entrance desk at the dorm have to break it up. I had Jorge as a roommate for a whole trimester, and in that time, I learned a lot about the art of punching. But the funny thing is, we are now still good friends. We just will never sleep in the same room together again.

And then there was Paul. He was another one of my dorm roommates. He wasn't quite as stupid as Jim, nor did he have a powerful stereo like Jorge. No. Paul just liked to skateboard. Not in the street. Not at a park. Not under a bridge or on the sidewalk in front of a building. No. Paul liked to skateboard in our dorm room. The twelve by fourteen dorm room. Somehow he convinced me we should build a ramp in our

room, where he could skate. So, we built a loft, and on top of that loft he built a ramp. A skateboard ramp. The wooden kind. A half-pipe. And he would go up and down that fucking ramp all day long. Of course he would continuously bang his head on the ceiling and curse, but he kept doing it. Day and night. I'd try to sleep under the ramp, in my little cubicle under the loft thing, and I'd hear him. Back and forth. Forth and back. Every once in a while I'd hear a "bonk" sound followed by a string of curses, and I'd know he just hit himself in the head. But he kept doing it. Sometimes I'd be trying to jerk off to *Penthouse* or *Playboy* or something, and I'd hear him going back and forth. Forth and back. Kinda like my hand.

I remember once coming back to the room between classes, and finding Paul and a friend both doing tricks on the ramp. His friend was a professional skater, and loved to skate indoors. On our loft. He was over a lot. Anyway, Paul kept fucking up, and seemed kinda agitated. I asked him what was wrong, and he told me he just got his midterm grades. I asked him if they were good, and he told me that he was failing all of his courses. I asked him why, and he told me it was because he had never been to any of his classes. At all. That he spent his time skating. Which was more important to him. I told him I could see that. He told me that they should pass him in school because he was such a great skater, and that one day he'd be on television. I just nodded my head. Roommates. So I went into my cubicle and listened to him go back and forth with his friend while I "read" *Playboy*. Finally Paul got kicked out of the University of Florida. I think I saw him once on television. On ESPN. He had finally "made it." He was carrying some guy's golf clubs and shagging golf balls.

And of course there was Richard. The worst of the worse. Actually, I guess he wasn't such a bad guy, but what happened between me and him, well, me and him and his girlfriend, Emily, well that is what probably changed my life forever, and what made me vow to never have a roommate of the same sex ever again. Ever.

Richard moved into my dorm room shortly after Jim, my KKK roommate, got accepted into a frat his father had been in, called Kappa Alpha, or KA for short, and moved out. I was kinda sad to see Jim go, I mean, hell, for all his stupidity, he was kinda funny. And this Richard guy seemed kinda normal. But as I learned, it is the "normal" ones ya gotta watch out for.

Richard seemed like a nice enough guy. He was Jewish, about my height and weight, and was from Washington, DC. Actually, Georgetown, a suburb of the place. I remember once asking him if he knew who Minor Threat, a band from there, was. He just looked at me and said in a snotty voice, "I don't associate with people like that." Whatever. Anyway, Richard's father had just died like a few months before he moved into the dorm, and I felt kinda bad for him. He had a picture of his dad on his desk, and would always look at it, and talk to it. It seems that is father had died of a heart attack, very suddenly, and just croaked. Like in a few minutes. Richard never got to say goodbye, and I really felt for the guy. Sometimes I would hear him talk to that picture, telling it he missed him, and that he was doing okay. And as far as things went, Richard was doing just fine. Just fine. In fact, I was jealous of Richard. Because of Emily. I mean, I shouldn't have been, but I was.

Emily was, well, a goddess. Actually, most girls were goddesses to me at that point in my life. I had been laid once, and it was a whole year since then, and my testosterone was going through the top of my head. And then I met Emily. I remember the first day Richard brought her over to our dorm. I was sitting on my too-small and too-hard standard issue dorm bed, rereading the lyrics to the Ramones *Rocket to Russia* album for the zillionth time. I really liked the pictures that went along with the lyrics. Anyway, there is knock on the door, and I open it and Richard and this girl are standing there. I asked Richard why he didn't just come in and he says he knocked 'cause he didn't wanna startle me. Most likely, he didn't wanna walk in on me with his girlfriend, if I was doing something, like, um, err, never mind. Anyway, Richard tells me that this girl is Emily, his girlfriend. I say "hi" to her, and tell her that Richard had talked a lot about her. He had. He had told me she was the greatest girl in the whole world, and that she was really hot. I had begun to think that she was his imaginary friend, but, well, here she was.

To Be Continued Next Month...

Drunk Until I Die.

The mighty LIMECELL—Philadelphia, Pennsylvania – Skinhead / Confederacy of Scum Legends—celebrated ten years of playing with a victory party at Whiskey Dicks Bar in Philadelphia recently. What a show! The CUFFS opened with the HOMICIDALS on second. Next up were the infamous WRETCHED ONES from the Garden State of New Jersey and these guys fucking rocked out! Armen, lead singer of the WRETCHED ONES and the man responsible for keeping the Headache Records sound alive, was fantastic! Ten long years ago Headache Records put out the first LIMECELL record with the classic tune "You're Not Punk, You're Dirty." Check out the WRETCHED ONES amazing set list: "Overtime," "Working Man," "We're Not Stopping," "Leave the Old Man Alone," "4 Walls," "Done with You," "Oi! Rodgers," "Dead Man Working," "Oi! Mode," "Bottles and Cans," "We're Going Down the Bar," "Save My Place," "Johnny Burnout," and "East Coast." Yes!

LIMECELL hit the stage next, and after a respectful tribute to Steve and Kevin's father, who was up front for the whole show, they proceeded to kick some punk rock ass! Have a look at this set list: "Ayatollah of Rock n Roll," "You're Not Punk You're Dirty.," "Pirate," "Pest," "Crack Hooker," "Just Plain Pissed," "Drunk Again," "Flip Flops and Champagne," "Dumber," "I Need a Raise," "Raped," "White Trash," "Piss Test," "Rat Fink," "Rosie Palm," "Marlboro. Miles," "Hot for the Slots," "Gingerbread Man," and "Drunk Until I Die." Fuck Yes!!

The Cosmic Commander and Mr. Jeff Skipski were in attendance and behaving badly! Mike and Lon from THE SONS OF LIBERTY and Greg from THE BOILS were up front thrashing up a storm. Thanks goes out to Steve, Bob, Irish Pat (original drummer!) and Kevin for organizing the whole extravaganza!

THE RITES follow up their brilliant seven inch with a self-titled debut LP on DeadAlive Records that rocks! The Edison, New Jersey punks rip through "It Gets Worse," "Go Out and Die," "Asshole City," "Dried Up," "Not Your Entertainment," "Self Defeated," "Your Last Rites," and more. This is fast punk with hammer-down guitar and excellent drumming. The singer sounds genuinely pissed-off. Get THE RITES LP from DeadAlive Records, PO Box 42593, Philadelphia, PA 19101; www.deadaliverecords.com.

Deranged Records from Canada has repressed the D.S.B. (DEFIANCE of SHIT BASTARDS) *No Fight, No Get* EP. This was originally released in 1996 on Devour Records. Side A starts the melee with "Fake," then you crash into "Reject, Denied, Refuse," which will thrash your socks off!

Turn the EP over—side two continues the punk rock battle!!! D.S.B. play "Never Die" and "Never Slave." This is a relentless pounding punk sound! Contact Deranged Records, PO Box 543, Station P, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2TI, Canada.

PO Box 543, Station P, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2TI, Canada.

CINDER and 33 AT 45 share a strong 10" record on Asperu Records from Portugal. CINDER, from Spain, plow right into the punk rock with "De Esta Agua No Bebere." The second tune is "Cinder vs. Daggers," and this one has hardcore punk authority. Third up is "Hit Me Back." Next, you get "Mala Hierba Nunca Muere," and then "Waiting Room." CINDER finish up with a Washington, DC. punk cover; "Sneakers," by TEEN IDLES—great!

Turn this record over and 33 AT 45 rock your world! These Portuguese punks come out with a bullet—"U.F.O. Roadkill"—very good! That song is just a warm-up for "By My Rules," which is fast and furious! The attitude gets even more surly with "Status Report: Fuck Off." Read these lyrics: "One by one, you're digging your fucking graves.../ And what we really hope is/ That you'll take your friends with you/ And be sure that we'll be there/ To close your goddam coffins!/ Who cares about who you know?/ Tell me, who gives a fuck about who you know?/ I surely don't/ Just leave me the fuck alone/ Let's pretend we never met!/ I hope you burn in fuckin' hell."

Next you get "Youth Anthem" followed by "You Don't Belong Here." Next 33 AT 45 ask, "Why Do We Kill?" which leads into "Life Is a four letter Word (Shit)." For the grand finale, 33 AT 45 cover SSD's "Boiling Point." Great! Write to Nuno Sota, Asperu Records, PO Box 229-2686, 997 Sacavem, Portugal; www.asperurecords.tk; sotokat@hotmail.com.

THE SWELLBELLYS have a top quality new CD ready to go on Torn Clock Records. These punks from Scotland have been thrashing across Europe for quite a few years. You might remember their excellent split EP with ASSERT on Intimidation Records. The new SWELLBELLYS CD is called *T.C.B.*. This fucker rocks with punk furor!! The lyrics are firmly planted in leftist politics. In the song "Total Fatality," THE SWELLBELLYS sing, "The danger signs are flashing red/ There's bodies lying full of lead/ The streets are crammed with refugees/ A total fatality." This *T.C.B.* CD has great leads, consistent chugging punk guitar and strong shouted vocals. Good shit! Order your SWELLBELLYS *T.C.B.* CD from Torn Clock Records, 39 Station Road, Thirsk, North Yorkshire, Y07 1QH, England; smallsailor@another.co.uk.

The RESTARTS, from England, have a fucking slick new CD for you punks! The RESTARTS have managed to craft a catchy type of melodic punk without losing the punk rock venom you need to hold the kids' attention. The new CD is on Active Distribution and it is entitled *System Error*. The RESTARTS come out of the blocks with lots of momentum on the leadoff tune, "Time Waster" and segue into "Walk Away," "Breaking My Balls" and the title cut, "System Error." Song number six brings together great punk guitar hooks and forceful lead vocals combined with harmonies. "Crucified" showcases the RESTARTS at the top of their game—you get blistering guitar leads, solid drum foundation, top flight bass playing and great choruses! The lyrics to "Crucified" are intelligent, read on: "Like blood that doesn't wash down your neck upon a block/ Events won't bring a stop, it's up against the clock/ And with no fence to sit up to your neck in it/ The scales are ever tipped to end under the whip/ Either way, you're crucified." Very good!

The RESTARTS surge through "Age of Fear" and "Double Standards." Song number nine is a love song called "Wouldn't Wanna." The band sings, "I can't talk or communicate/ I can't give or reciprocate/ Watch it all just disintegrate"—such a romantic approach! Next up is "Never Know" and this one is followed by a strong punk tune called "Frustration." On "Frustration" the RESTARTS employ their two lead singers to the fullest. This is a superior punk product! Write to Active Distribution, BM Active, London WCIN 3XX, England; www.activedistribution.org.

Scumfuck Records has a new Oi! CD ready for you fucks! the artist is HANTELZ and the title is *Oi! To My Friends*. This German Oi! band has a melodic approach to street music. Song two, the title cut, "Oi! To My Friends," gets the ball rolling—good stuff! We steam through "Deine Wahl" and arrive at "Stimme Der Strasse," which is mid-paced Oi! with good sing-a-long vocals and strong guitar parts. Next up you get "Skins Are Back" – an up tempo number with appropriate lyrics sung with conviction. You'll like the accompanying choruses of "Skins are back"—very good! We plow through "K," "Hinter Deinem Ruecken," and "Smash this Bullshit." Now you are in for more Oi! activity—experienced in "Zeichen An Dich," a slower more brooding number. Song number eleven is a cover song "Up Yours," originally performed by CONDEMNED 84—excellent! The final song is the band's theme song, entitled, not surprisingly, "Hantelz." This song ends the CD on a spirited street-noise note. Order *Oi! To My Friends* from Scumfuck, PSF 100709, 46527 Dinslaken, Germany; www.scumfucktradition.de.

Yes! THE LOWER CLASS BRATS from Austin, Texas, have a new CD out on Punk Core Records. The new product is called *A Class of Our Own* . Bones, Marty and company prove to be the most passionate of punk zealots again! The fun starts with "Golden Boy," about a bad seed of a son. Then you get "No Doves Fly Here"—very good! Song number three is "Just Like Clockwork"— this has that great ADICTS sound that THE LOWER CLASS BRATS do so well. Up next is "Our Dignity" with some very good lyrics – read on: "The time is coming near/ We thought you all should hear/ that we're not in the shadows anymore/ We're standing side by side/ We're ready to collide/ I think you know what we've come for/ We're taking back our dignity/ Punks and skins back to the streets/ Herberts and Hooligans never retreat/ We won't be taken down/ Always two feet on the ground/ Unless we're drunk and passed out on the floor/ You best keep to yourself/ Or we'll put you on the shelf/ Don't come around—I think you know the score." Yeah!

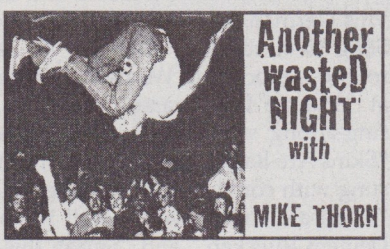
The BRATS crank up the adrenaline with "Standard Issue"—good song! You get "Loser's Club," "I Don't Wanna," and then you hear "LOWER CLASS BRATS Roadcrew" about the joys of sex and drugs and rock n' roll on tour. Song number ten is "Barbie Dolls" about silicon and collagen injected girls brainwashed by society. The next tune "Dance Until You Drop," was originally performed by the DEFECTS. For the final cut THE LOWER CLASS BRATS kick your butt with "Shot Up, Shot Down." This is a really good album for you punks! Write to: Dave Punk Core, PO Box 916, Middle Island, NY 11953; email: info@punkcore.com.

The ROTTEN BOi!S from Parma, Italy have a fine new CD for you punks and skins. The new CD on Pure Punk Records is called *Pogo, Beer and Spikey Hair...This is Our Life*, and the CD compiles the singles and split EPs that THE ROTTEN BOi!S did from 1997 to 2002. This CD illustrates how consistently good this band of punks has been during "Five Years of Chaos." Get this CD as soon as possible! Write to Alex Bagatti, c/o Pure Punk Records, Casella Postale 214, 43100 Parma (PR), Italy; www.purepunk.it

Combat Rock Industry Records from Finland has a hardcore blast for you punks! For your listening pleasure you have I.R.D. (I REN DESPERATION) and their *Aldrig Kopt—Aldrig Sald* EP. This fucker comes out swinging with "Hakta Mig" and then slides right into the title cut "Aldrig Kopt Aldrig Sald." This is good fast punk rock with liberal amounts of electric guitar solos sprinkled in. Side two starts with "The Lost Boys," a slower number with a great 70s rock guitar sound. This is a very good EP. For Combat Rock Industry product write to PO Box 65, 11101 Riihmaki, Finland; www.combatrockindustry.com.

Until next month—see you around...

See you fucks at the bar



In regards to Felix's retort in his column about my anti-moustache comments a few issues back, he talks tough but he knows the golden rule—shave clean to stay in the scene. It's that simple. Really Felix, you know that the only people that have moustaches are: cops, child molestors, communists like Joeseph Stalin, fascists like Adolph Hitler, and metal heads. As a proper punk rocker, I am opposed to all of these things, and more than anything else was shocked and horrified to see you sporting one upon my arrival in Minneapolis. Sorry I hurt your feelings, but I am happy to see that Billy & Paddy from Dillinger Four took my advice and not only held you down and shaved that shit, but waxed it too. On a related tangent, I do agree with Felix in regards to the flip-flop issue. Seriously, no one wants to see your fucking toes, hippy, and almost as important, it's a safety issue. Oh yeah, burritos are still great.

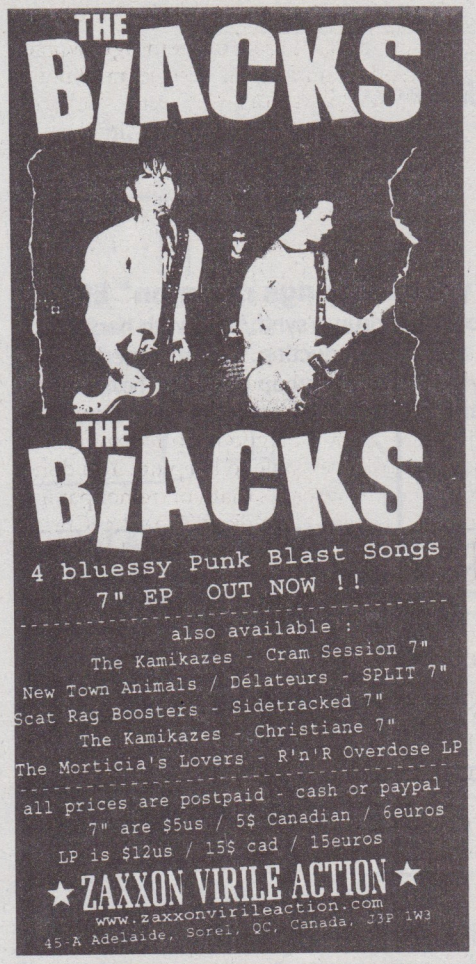
I've been spending a lot of time walking around early in the morning these days. I find myself waking up periodically throughout the night and will normally give up on trying to sleep at about 6:45 am. Some days I just lay awake in bed, others I get up and wander. Mostly through the park near my house, watching the early morning dog walkers, the homeless coming out of their nightly sleeping spots, and the mountain of joggers that all call the park their home. I spend a lot of time just thinking, there's just something about the air at that early hour that is just indescribable, and makes it conducive to pondering everything that's going on in my life. Mostly I've been thinking a good deal about death.

It all started when my father went into the hospital about a month and half ago—reigniting my fear of not ever getting to know him as an adult, and instead my only knowledge of and relationship with him would be limited to the combative and adversarial interactions of my teenage years. The possibility of his death ripped me apart inside, and even after he was released from the hospital and everything seems to be OK, it's something that still tears at me. Though the obvious advice would be to just start talking to him about how I'm feeling and what I'm thinking, like most of you, I'm not really certain how, given that all our conversations of the last 17 years have been nothing more than stunted attempts at avoiding conflict. Despite this, we always end up either at each other's throats or seemingly worse, in awkward long moments of uncomfortable silence, not knowing what to say. It's frustrating, as you can imagine, and so I spend my nights awaking and my mornings wandering.

Not to be a total downer. I hope most of you managed to catch Caustic Christ on their recent tour with Municipal Waste. If you didn't you most certainly missed out on one of the best live bands currently running. You know, Jack from World Burns to Death made the comment during their set at Pointless Fest in Philly, and I want to echo it—it's a great time to be a punk. Seriously, despite the fact that the majors are on an all time push to co-opt, market, and sell "punk" (and sadly, so many "punks" are more than happy to asist them!) the *real* punk underground couldn't be stronger. No matter what stupid sub-genre you say you're into, there's just mountains of good stuff coming out right now, so much so that it's impossible to keep up. You don't think so? Then it's pretty fucking obvious that you're not paying attention. Bands like the Tyrades, Provoked, Caustic Christ, Sleeper Cell, Signal Lost, Triggers, FM Knives, World Burns to Death, Tragedy, Skitkids, No Fucker, Dillinger Four, Storm The Tower, Born Dead Icons, Disclose, Framtid, Marked Men, Wreckage, and on and on and on are every bit as good if not better than anything in the history of punk. So fuck Black Flag and their botched reunion. Fuck Discharge and their pathetic attempt to recapture past glory. Fuck all these dinosaurs that stalk the Earth. Quit living in the past.

The Bay Area in paticular is having a bit of a quality punk rock boom right now, despite the constant struggle to find good all ages venues for bands to play at. Bands like Desolation, Sistema Brutale, Dissonance, Funeral Shock, Our Turn, Doppleganger, Before The Fall, Eskapo and Look Back and Laugh have all recently released some top notch demos, while Cropknox, This Is My Fist, Sharp Knife, The Grabbies, Born/Dead, Deadly Weapons, Takaru, Blown To Bits, Deadfall, Scattered Fall, Onion Flavored Rings, Nigel Peppercock, Panty Raid, Strung Up, Scurvy Dogs, Phantom Limbs, Allergic To Bullshit and Voetsek have all recently put out some vinyl for your listening pleasure. In addition, while cruising around in the Bay Area be certain to check out bands like The Peels, Case Of Emergency, The Pox, Second Opinion, Claredon Hills, Abandon, I Love A Parade, and countless others who I'm certain I may have missed. So stop you're whining, and leave your fucking house for once.

Write me c/o *MRR* or via mikethorn@maximumrocknroll.com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AIR FORCE TO OUST REFUSENIK PILOTS

27 pilots send letter calling aerial activity in territories "illegal and immoral"

by Amos Harel and Lily Galili
Published on Thursday, September 25, 2003 by Haaretz (Israel)

A group of reserve pilots in the Israel Air Force is planning to publicly announce their refusal to participate in attempts to assassinate senior wanted men in the Palestinian Authority.

The group has been discussing the initiative for more than three months and members say that they have been badly torn. According to sources in the movement of soldiers who refuse to serve in the territories, the group is in the process of collecting the last signatures and is waiting for "the right moment" to issue its announcement.

The various refusal movements view the pilots' planned declaration as a big boost for their cause, due to the special status enjoyed by pilots in Israeli society, and hope that it will shake up Israelis in a way that "ordinary" refusals have not. Though one pilot joined the refusal movement at the start of the intifada, and though there were a few incidents during the Lebanon War of pilots refusing to bomb specific targets, a declaration by an organized group of pilots would be something new.

The pilots initially considered joining one of the existing refusal movements, such as Courage to Refuse - the group of soldiers and officers who signed a declaration of refusal to serve in the territories more than 18 months ago. However, they eventually decided to form an independent group.

Since Courage to Refuse was founded, with 50 members, more than 500 soldiers have signed its letter of refusal. However, the group has failed in its goal of provoking a public discourse over the continued occupation of the territories and Israel Defense Forces actions there. It is now hoping that the pilots' declaration will succeed where it has failed.

Altogether 27 reserve pilots signed the letter, details of which were published last week in Haaretz, but only nine of them still do active duty with the force.

The signatories, who sent the letter to Air Force Commander Dan Halutz, described aerial activity in the territories as "illegal and immoral."

Halutz told Haaretz last night he planned to treat the signatories "in the same way as the IDF has dealt with refuseniks until now. This method has proven itself." The nine pilots will be called to meetings with the heads of their bases in the coming days and if they do not retract their statement, they will be dismissed from active service.

The signatories to the letter wrote they would refuse to take part in aerial attacks on populated Palestinian areas in the territories.

"We, both veteran and active pilots, who have served and who still serve the state of Israel, are opposed to carrying out illegal and immoral orders to attack, of the type Israel carries out in the territories," the letter states. "We, for whom the IDF and the air force are an integral part of our being, refuse to continue to hit innocent civilians... The continued occupation is critically harming the country's security" and moral fiber, it added.

Halutz has ordered an investigation into the legality of wearing pilots' flightsuits during interviews the pilots gave to Channel Two last night. Halutz said he believes the uniform can be worn only during reserve duty. If the interviews were given during reserve duty, the pilots had to get IDF permission, he noted. "Uniforms can not be used to put across a political message," he said. Halutz added that he personally was completely at one with the deployment of the air force in the territories, saying that a great deal of consideration was employed.

According to one military source, many of the signatories had stopped flying some 15 years ago because of their age. Only one flies an Apache of the type that takes part in targeted assassinations and one flies an F-16 fighter bomber, used sometimes for bombing targets in the territories. It is not clear if either of the two has actually been involved in activity in the territories.

Two others are pilots of Blackhawks, a transport plane, and another teaches cadets to fly an F-15.

"This is an attempt to inject new blood into a subject that is dead both from the public and media point of view - refusal. It is not clear why the pilots did not first speak to their commanders. Their behavior was not ethical," one senior source said last night.

Halutz last night sent a circular to senior air force commanders with details of the affair. "Most of the signatories have never participated in targeted assassinations in the territories. They are not active fighers or do not serve in squadrons which deal with that," he said.

Halutz noted that "no order had ever been issued to hit innocent people. Sometimes we took decisions that were not optimal because we wanted to avoid hurting innocent civilians."

Chief of Staff Moshe Ya'alon described the affair as "a political statement made in army uniforms. This is in no way legitimate," he said.

The initiative for the letter was formulated over a period of about three months following the massive wounding of civilians during the aerial attack on Hamas leader Salah Shehadeh in Gaza in June of this year. The idea met with a great deal of soul-searching inside the IDF. Although the plans for the letter were reported on Friday in Haaretz, the signatories gave exclusive rights for interviews to Channel Two and Yedioth Ahronoth.

Halutz received the letter only at 6 P.M. yesterday, after the interview had been printed.

Captain Yonatan, speaking on behalf of the signatories, said last night: "We are all loyal citizens of the state of Israel. We have taken this step after deep thought and much soul-searching. As officers and pilots, we have been given the heavy responsibility of operating a most powerful war machine. As people who were educated with the moral code of the IDF and the state of Israel, we have decided to ... obey the order that obliges us not to carry out an order that is blatantly illegal."

US SOLDIER KILLS RARE TIGER DURING PARTY AT BAGHDAD ZOO

BAGHDAD - A U.S. soldier shot dead a rare Bengal tiger at Baghdad zoo after the animal injured a colleague who was trying to feed it through the cage bars, the zoo's manager said on Saturday.

Adil Salman Mousa told Reuters a group of U.S. soldiers were having a party in the zoo on Thursday night, after it had closed.

"Someone was trying to feed the tigers," he said. "The tiger bit his finger off and clawed his arm. So his colleague took a gun and shot the tiger."

The night watchman said the soldiers had arrived in military vehicles but were casually dressed and were drinking beer.

There was no immediate U.S. comment.

At the tiger's now-empty cage, pools of blood showed that the soldier passed through a first cage intended only for keepers and was standing right up against the inner cage's narrow bars.

Mousa said U.S. officials came to see him on Friday to discuss the incident.

The tiger was one of two in the zoo—once the largest in the Middle East, today a decrepit collection of dirty cages and sad-looking animals.

In April, U.S. soldiers killed four lions that had escaped from the zoo. Hundreds of other animals were stolen or let loose by looters in the aftermath of the U.S. invasion of the Iraqi capital.

U.S. ABORTION POLICY HITS CLINICS ABROAD

by Maggie Fox

WASHINGTON - President Bush's anti-abortion policy has hit clinics in poor countries hard, forcing some to close and leave entire communities without healthcare, according to a report issued on Wednesday.

Under the policy, known as the Mexico City rule by supporters and the Global Gag rule by opponents, foreign family planning agencies cannot receive U.S. funds if they provide abortion services or lobby to make or keep abortion legal in their own country.

A survey of Ethiopia, Kenya, Romania and Zambia by Population Action International and the Planned Parenthood Federation of America showed the rule had forced clinics to close and left many men and women without access to contraceptives that could prevent both unwanted pregnancies and AIDS.

"Health services have been scaled back and closings of reproductive health clinics have left some communities with no healthcare provider," the group wrote in a statement.

The policy has also hurt AIDS prevention efforts, said the groups, which published the findings on the Internet at www.globalgagrule.org.

As one of his first acts in office in 2001, Bush reinstated the rule that former President Bill Clinton, a Democrat, had lifted. The rule was originally imposed in 1984 by President Ronald Reagan at a Mexico City conference.

Last month Bush ordered the State Department to strengthen the rule by withholding U.S. family planning help from overseas groups that promote or perform abortions with their own money.

PROTECT WOMENS' HEALTH

Supporters say the United States should not be spending taxpayer money to promote abortion. Opponents argue that abortion is legal in the United States and elsewhere and that abortion counseling is part of a wide range of advice that women need to protect their health.

"Our research has found that the Global Gag Rule is taking a toll on the lives and health of women, children and families around the world," the report reads. Five family planning clinics run by nongovernmental organizations have closed in Kenya because they broke the rule and lost funding from the U.S. Agency for International development, the report said.

"The NGOs have also had to cut their staffing by as much as 30 percent, reduce services in remaining clinics and raise fees in order to remain viable."

"In Lesotho, one in four women is infected with HIV/AIDS—one of the highest rates in southern Africa. Over a three-year period from 1998 to 2000, the Lesotho Planned Parenthood Association received 426,000 condoms ... all donated by USAID," the report added.

"Because of their refusal to agree to the gag rule restrictions, they no longer receive USAID contraceptives."

In Kenya's Mathare Valley a clinic closed, leaving 300,000 people with no healthcare services. "And there is no other family planning or reproductive health clinic nearby," the report said.

In Romania, women may be more likely to get abortions, not fewer, because the rule has meant more women cannot get any information on contraceptives that can prevent unwanted pregnancies, the report said.

"This is the real face of Bush's compassionate conservatism—a war on the world's most vulnerable women and children, who bear the brunt of Bush's obsession with appeasing his domestic political base," Planned Parenthood's Gloria Feldt said in a statement.

FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO DISSENT: SPEECH, SILENCE AND PATRIOTISM

by Sara Paretsky
Published by the Chicago Tribune

A cloud of unknowing surrounds St. Johns College in Santa Fe, Andrew O'Connor and his long interrogation by Albuquerque police and the Secret Service in February 2003. O'Connor was removed from the college library by police after he made negative comments about President Bush in an online chat room. But since he was ultimately released without being charged, he clearly had not threatened the president's life. What he said, how the police and Secret Service knew he said it, and the gag order on the college to keep people from talking about his arrest, are all shrouded in silence.

Similarly, we don't know what a New Jersey library user was reading the day another patron called the police to report that the man was looking at a foreign-language Web page. But the man was hauled off for questioning, held without being allowed to call his home or a lawyer, and then released without being charged. We also don't know why the FBI arrived at a California student's home hours after she talked on the phone about bomb icons in a video game she was playing.

The only thing we do know is that all these acts by police and FBI are legal under the USA Patriot Act. A few years ago, I was almost arrested in the middle of the night. The police stopped a hit man just before he reached his target. The hit man had a card with my name and the title of one of my books on the seat next to him, and the police were sure I was involved. But they had to get a warrant, and the assistant state's attorney wouldn't issue it. Today, though, the cops could just come and get me. And U.S. Atty. Gen. John Ashcroft thinks that's fine.

In fact, as Ashcroft has taken his dog-and-pony show on the road, he's been saying that not only is it good for the police to arrest me, or library patrons, or college students, without needing to show probable cause, they should have even more power. They should be able to search all our records, and to hold us without bail when they do arrest us. He says those of us objecting are "raising the phantom of lost liberty," and we're giving "ammunition to America's enemies."

I grew up in Kansas during the shadow of the Cold War, when religion and patriotism were conflated and we attended daylong revivals of religion and daylong lectures on patriotism. The local paper pilloried my parents for questioning the revivals, printing their phone number and urging readers to call them—which happened for some months, usually in the middle of the night. A popular high school teacher had to resign because he was doing a PhD in Russian history—and only a communist would study Russia. In the larger society, Martin Luther King Jr. was hounded with lies claiming he was a communist, and Dashiell Hammett, who wrote "The Maltese Falcon," spent six months in prison for refusing to name names to the infamous House Un-American Activities Committee. Hammett's publishers even bowed to pressure from the House and briefly took his books out of print.

These days, the chill-silencing winds of my childhood are starting to blow at gale force again. I am a frightened citizen right now, more scared than I've been since the first few weeks after Sept. 11, 2001. The situation in post-war Iraq seems to be creating, not eliminating, new sources of terfor, while the nation's worst blackout on Aug. 14 shows how vulnerable we are. And Ashcroft's response is to say that any questions about his policies, any questions about governmental lies, secrets or silences, is tantamount to treason.

When I started writing my most recent book, "Blacklist," it was under the shadow of the attack on the Twin Towers. I started writing it soon after Sept. 11--maybe too soon, when I was still feeling numbed and shocked. I started with my detective, V.I. Warshawski, in that state—it was the only way I could write, by having her express the reality of my feelings—the feelings we all had two years ago. During the 18 months it took me to write the book, the powers of the Patriot Act and the actions of the U.S. attorney general began frightening me almost as much as Al Qaeda.

Silence and speech are the hallmarks of my work: who can speak, what can they say, who will listen to them? In "Blacklist," V.I. gets penned into a smaller and smaller space by an array of business and political leaders who call on the power of the Patriot Act to silence her. She finally figures out a strategy to wriggle out of danger. But in the real world today, I don't know how someone would evade the police and political forces V.I. faces—I don't know how I would.

I think of Patrick Henry's cry to the Burgesses, "Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?" and William Lloyd Garrison's cry to slavery forces, "I am in earnest. I will not equivocate; I will not excuse; I will not retreat a single inch; and I will be heard." I don't want ever to face the choice the U.S. Congress gave Dashiell Hammett: choose between prison and betraying my friends. I don't want to be pilloried in the papers, as my parents were, or have my books blacklisted. But even more, I hope if I am put to the test for my beliefs, I will be strong enough to stand with our true patriots, with Patrick Henry and William Lloyd Garrison, with Dashiell Hammett—and my parents.

Sara Paretsky is a mystery novelist

Bush Isolated as Speech to UN Falls Flat

by Gary Younge in New York

George Bush was increasingly isolated on the global stage yesterday as he defied intense criticism from a litany of world leaders at the United Nations over the war on Iraq.

Showing no contrition for defying the world body in March or the declining security situation in Iraq, the US president called for the world to set aside past differences and help rebuild the country: "Now the nation of Iraq needs and deserves our aid - and all nations of goodwill should step forward and provide that support," he said.

But the French president, Jacques Chirac, who spoke after Mr Bush, blamed the US-led war for sparking one of the most severe crises in the history of the UN and argued that Mr Bush's unilateral actions could lead to anarchy.

"No one can act alone in the name of all and no one can accept the anarchy of a society without rules," he said. "The war, launched without the authorization of the security council, shook the multilateral system. The UN has just been through one of the most grave crises in its history."

Earlier the UN secretary general, Kofi Annan, condemned the doctrine of preemptive military intervention, arguing that it could lead to the unjustified "lawless use of force" and posed a "fundamental challenge" to world peace and stability.

"My concern is that, if it were to be adopted, it could set precedents that resulted in a proliferation of the unilateral and lawless use of force, with or without credible justification," said Mr Annan. "This logic represents a fundamental challenge to the principles on which, however imperfectly, world peace and stability have rested for the last 58 years."

The Brazilian president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who also spoke before Mr Bush, said: "A war can perhaps be won single-handedly. But peace - lasting peace - cannot be secured without the support of all."

Mr Bush's speech was received with polite applause from the 191-member states, while his critics were given a far warmer reception.

The American president was not just under fire for his decision to wage war without international consent but also for his refusal to move more quickly towards handing control of the country back to the Iraqi people.

Both Mr Chirac and the German chancellor Gerhard Schröder, called for a transition within months, insisting that this was crucial to securing peace. Mr Bush has not laid out a timetable. "This process must unfold according to the needs of Iraqis - neither hurried nor delayed by the voices of other parties," he said.

Mr Bush is under increasing domestic political pressure to outline a strategy to get out of Iraq, where increasing military casualties and growing financial burden on a strained economy are draining support ahead of next year's presidential election.

Having bypassed the UN to bomb Iraq, America returned to the security council earlier this month asking for military and financial help to assist it with the costs of the occupation. The resolution is currently before the security council, where France has the power of veto.

US-BACKED COUNCIL BARS ARAB MEDIA

by Roshan Muhammed Salih
Published by Aljazeera.Net

BAGHDAD—Freedom of speech campaigners have condemned US-appointed authorities in Iraq for banning television stations Aljazeera and al- Arabiya.

Iraq's Governing Council said on Tuesday the stations were prohibited from covering official activities in Iraq for two weeks.

It said the action was taken as a warning to broadcasters who incite anti-US violence.

"Al-Jazeera and al-Arabiya will temporarily be excluded from any coverage of Governing Council activities or official press conferences, and correspondents of the two channels will not be allowed to enter ministries or government offices for two weeks," the council said in a statement.

US officials have accused Qatar-based Aljazeera and Dubai-based al-Arabiya of giving too much prominence to anti-US attacks and providing a forum for backers of ousted President Saddam Hussein.

Bias

Both channels, which are competitors for the Arab world audience, strenuously deny charges of bias.

Aljazeera spokesman Jihad Ballut said the station regretted the decision, but "will continue our work as usual until we are officially notified".

Al-Arabiya officials have yet to react in detail.

However, Rohan Jayasekera, of London-based Index on Censorship, said the bans were "blatantly unfair".

"The Americans and the British have had previous experience in Bosnia and Kosovo of the difficult balancing act between encouraging democracy and an independent media and preventing incitement to violence.

Due process

"They managed it quite well there but have failed in Iraq. At the moment, the Governing Council is basically told what to do by the Americans. But if they are going to ban media outlets then the complaints have to be addressed fairly and there has to be a right of reply."

And British MP and Iraq expert George Galloway said the council decision was an indictment of the way the American-led forces were running the country.

"This puts a nail in the coffin of the big lie that the West was going into Iraq to liberate the country in the name of freedom and democracy and to rid it of the yoke of dictatorship," he said.

"Aljazeera and al-Arabiya have the right to report news. They cater to their audience and will obviously favouritise stories their audience is interested in.

"Other media organisations should protest vociferously against this decision because today it is Aljazeera and al-Arabiya but tomorrow it could be them."

Resistance

Galloway also denied the Americans had a right to act against media outlets to prevent attacks on their troops.

"The Iraqi resistance have a legitmate right to defend their country. After all, they didn't ask the Americans to invade Iraq with all guns blazing.

"And in any case, the Iraqi resistance is working underground and has no access to electricity, let alone TV. The idea that they are waiting for Aljazeera and al-Arabiya to give them the nod before they do anything borders on the ridiculous."

And he predicted the censorship would ultimately backfire on the occupation forces.

"The British Prime Minister banned the Irish Republican Army in the 1980s and tried to deny them access to all media. But all that achieved was to reduce the government to the level of the IRA and to make them a laughing stock," he said.

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IRAQI WOMEN NO BETTER OFF, U.N. OFFICIAL SAYS

by Sue Pleming

WASHINGTON - In many ways, Iraqi women are worse off than before U.S. forces ousted Saddam Hussein and are too afraid to play a big political role for fear of being a target of extremists, a senior U.N. official said on Tuesday.

Noeleen Heyzer, executive director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, said the poor security situation prevented women from playing a bigger role in rebuilding Iraq.

"For many women, they do not want to take the risk. They have seen what happened to Akila al-Hashemi," Heyzer said. Hashemi, one of three women on the Iraqi Governing Council, was critically wounded in an attack in Baghdad last Saturday.

"We need to address this culture of fear and the culture of terrorism as until you do that you are not going to have people (women) participating," Heyzer said at a lunch to discuss the role of women in conflict zones.

The United States has said women should play a big role in rebuilding Iraq but Heyzer, whose organization promotes women's rights and tries to improve the lot of women in developing countries, said many women saw the risk as being too high.

"Even if they want to engage they feel they can't at the moment," she said.

TOO AFRAID TO GO OUT

In many areas, Iraqi women were too afraid to take their children to school for fear of them being attacked and some were being forced by male relatives to wear veils as a means of protection.

"They are trying to get on with everyday life ... but life is, in that sense, worse for Iraqi women even though there are possibilities of greater opportunities as they move toward democracy," she told Reuters.

Heyzer said there was a contest between moderates and extremists to win over women in Iraq and the international community needed to do more to support women, who were among the most educated in the Middle East.

"There was a lot of hope that the lives (of women) would improve ... but we have a situation where a lot of extremists have come into the country and women do not want to live under such extremism."

Before the bombing of the U.N.'s headquarters in Baghdad last month, Heyzer said the United Nations had mobilized about 450 women for a national symposium.

But after the bombing, she said this meeting was canceled and those women were now too frightened to become openly involved in such a process.

"Now they want to be involved under the radar screen and to have local consultations. When the timing is right we will bring them all back together again."

Under Saddam's rule, she said women had played some leadership roles but that they had been ignored at the local level and this was where her organization was working hardest in Iraq.

RELIGIOUS POLICE CALL TIME ON MALAYSIAN PUNKS AND SKINS

BruneiDirect.com is reporting that the Islamic department in the capital of the Malaysian state of Kelantan has launched a campaign to rid the area of punk and skinhead culture after deciding they are un-Islamic.

Teenagers who sport Mohican haircuts may find themselves confronted with a pair of clippers and verses from the Koran.

During a recent gathering as part of Malaysia's Independence Day celebrations, a 17-year old youth was detained for looking "excessively punky."

He was reportedly wearing torn clothes and had his head died red and cropped into a Mohican: known in Malaysia as a "Trojan" haircut. He was given a lecture by officials who offered him Koranic verses and told him to abandon his unhealthy lifestyle before shaving his head.

A spokesman for the state's chief minister says that the party is not against all Western styles but that authorities are concerned to prevent any possible gang rivalries from developing.

There have been a number of cases in Malaysia recently where government ministers have criticized council officials for the manner in which they have enforced morality by laws.

Officers in Kuala Lumpur and the northern city of Ipoh were told that they had overstepped the mark after trying to fine couples for holding hands in public.

Two years ago, fans of "black metal" found themselves out of favor with the authorities when the religious affairs committee in the northern state of Kedah proposed to medicate rockers they accused of practicing Satanism, carrying out animal sacrifices and defiling the Koran with drugs used to treat addicts.

Both Kedah and Kelantan are conservative rural areas where Malay Muslims are in a large majority.

Local attitudes towards Western fashion may have as much to do with a certain small-town mentality as religious sensibilities.

In large cities like Kuala Lumpur young people are far freer to express themselves.

SIX ANARCHISTS ARRESTED IN BARCELONA SPAIN

The morning of Tuesday the 16th of Sept., six anarchists were arrested in Barcelona. The Guardia Civil raided four different apartments while the comrades were sleeping. The apartments were searched and the comrades were taken the same day to Madrid to be interrogated.

The Guardia Civil are claiming that the six are a terrorist cell that is responsible for a book bomb that was sent to the Greek Embassy in Madrid on the 8th of September, which was defused. Because of the serious nature of the accusations, the comrades are being treated as terrorists under the anti-terrorist law, meaning that for three to five days, the comrades will be held without seeing anyone except their interrogaters—including lawyers. The comrades are also being accused of other "low intensity" terrorist actions, which are unknown to us on the outside.

In two of the four apartments raided, firearms were supposedly found, along with material to make explosives. Also, the Guardia Civil took computers, money, magazines, mobile phones, and other things that could have no possible relation to any crime.

We are writing this to inform people who might know Teo through his activity in punk. Teo sings in the group OTAN from Barcelona, plays drums in Destruccion from his hometown of Arnedo, does a fanzine called *Miguel/Escupe al Alcalde,* and also has a mailorder of t-shirts that he makes of old Spanish punk bands. Teo is super active and everyone knows him, but we still need your help—pass on this notice.

The same evening as the arrests here in Barcelona, there was a demonstration with about 50 people—there was a banner that read "Free Anarchist Prisoners" and some comrades were handing out flyers with the little information that was known. The next demonstration will be Friday the 19th at 7:00 pm in Plaza Universidad in Barcelona. There is also a bank account open for bail and legal fees, if there are comrades that can organize benefits or contribute, the account number for international contributions is :IBAN ES 0182 7028 2102 0153 0482. Help us spread the word.

We see this for what it is, as an attack against the anarchist movement in general. We will not be stopped, because we have a new world in our hearts.

Freedom for Joaquin, Rafa, Carol, Igor, Roger, and Teo.

For more information in Spanish, go to www.alasbarricadas.org.

FARM SUBSIDIES RIGHTLY INSPIRE THIRD WORLD TRADE REVOLT

by Brian Halweil
Published by the St Paul Pioneer Press (Minnesota)

In the real world, an ear of corn isn't always just an ear of corn. Food is wrapped up in culture, ethnic pride, cuisine and national security.

Everyone present at the global trade negotiations in Cancun, Mexico, earlier this month understood this — though delegates from the United States, Europe and Japan pretended not to. As a result, a block of participants from Africa, Asia and Latin America walked out and the talks disintegrated.

Suddenly, the flotilla of farmers, environmentalists, consumer advocates and workers protesting outside the fenced-off convention center shared a common enemy with the Third World delegates inside who were arguing that global rules on agricultural trade were crippling their impoverished farm economies.

In the aftermath, trade experts warned that the world may lack the stomach for further market-opening measures and that the global economic slowdown would continue. But the collapse in Cancun should spur some creative thinking.

Current trade agreements prevent developing nations from favoring their own farmers and homegrown produce. Worse, the same agreements allow First World governments to subsidize their own farmers — to the tune of $300 billion a year.

These subsidies allow wealthy nations to sell farm commodities on world markets at well below the cost of production. (In a nutshell, if it costs a farmer $3 to grow a bushel of corn, but the market is paying $2 a bushel, the government pays the farmer an extra buck, allowing the farmer to sell the crop for less than he otherwise could.) This is called dumping, and it's flatly illegal under international trade rules.

Both the United States and the European Union are notorious for dumping agricultural products.

Mexico provides a stark example. The country that hosted the Cancun talks also provided a large portion of the protesters: its own displaced farmers. Under the North American Free Trade Agreement and other trade rules, Mexico has been encouraged, even forced, to rely increasingly on cheap U.S. corn.

How could that be? Mexico's lower labor and living costs should give local growers a competitive edge. But Uncle Sam has his thumb on the scales in the form of $10 billion in annual subsidies that enable American corn growers to sell corn at $2.20 per bushel — about 25 percent below production costs. a

The result: Mexico now imports more than a quarter of its corn from the United States. That represents a nearly four-fold surge since NAFTA took effect nine years ago. Over the same period, inflation-adjusted prices for Mexican corn have plummeted by more than 70 percent, prompting millions of local growers to abandon their farms and seek work in nearby cities or the United States.

Thus, when Third World representatives at Cancun demanded that wealthy nations eliminate their agricultural subsidies, it wasn't simply to gain access to the world's most affluent markets, where food imports now look artificially expensive. They wanted to give farmers in Africa, Asia and Latin America a fighting chance in their own domestic markets.

Why does this argument seem so unpalatable? The United States and Europe developed their farm subsidies half a century ago to provide a safety net for their farmers. But the subsidies have had the perverse effect of favoring the largest producers and helping to drive smaller farmers out of business in both the United States and Europe. These subsidies also deny poorer nations the kind of farmer-led growth and food security that was considered so critical to recovery in post-war America and Europe.

This is not to argue that every locale should produce all of its food. Food trade is natural and beneficial. But nations that increase their self-reliance can buffer themselves against the whims of foreign markets, while creating local jobs and income.

The persistence of the subsidies testifies to the awesome influence of the interest groups that clearly benefit: the largest farmers and international food processors and brokers such as Archer Daniels Midland and Cargill. Yet subsidies need not stick in our craw forever. Creative governments can restructure their farm-support programs to reduce the burden on taxpayers and improve the environmental performance of farms, without crippling producers in undeveloped nations.

A few innovative nations in Europe already are shifting subsidies away from paying farmers to produce specific commodities toward rewarding farmers for meeting ecological goals: rotating crops, reducing pesticide use and creating on-farm refuges for wildlife. This shift spreads farm payments more equitably and boosts struggling rural economies without distorting international markets. And taxpayers — who now provide half of farm income in wealthy nations — should be happy to know that their money isn't going to fatten agribusiness.

Still, these measures are minor and slow to arrive, even in Europe. And they are all but absent in the United States. (Early drafts of last year's farm bill included some new "conservation payments," but Congress chopped most of them out of the final draft and hasn't funded all the ones that remain.)

Global trade in food isn't going to vanish if Third World countries become more self-sufficient. Since 1961, the value of food shipped between countries has tripled, while the tonnage has grown four-fold.

As long as wealthy nations remain mired in the Dark Ages of farm policy, however, international trade talks are bound to stall, and the world will never share the benefits that greater trade is supposed to bring.

Brian Halweil is a senior researcher for food policy at the Worldwatch Institute.

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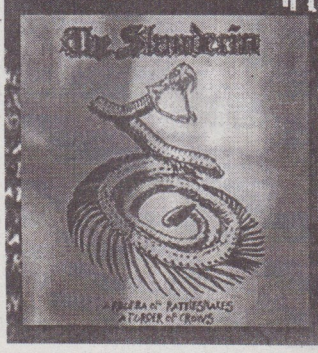

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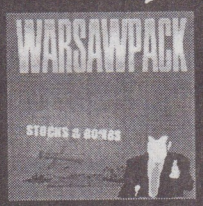

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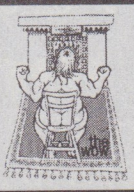

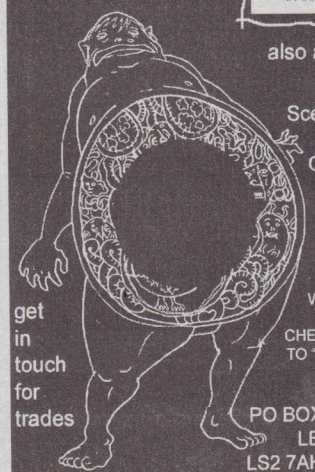

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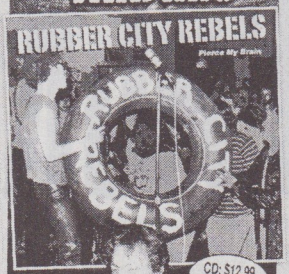

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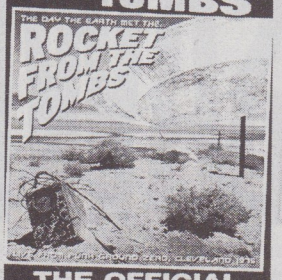

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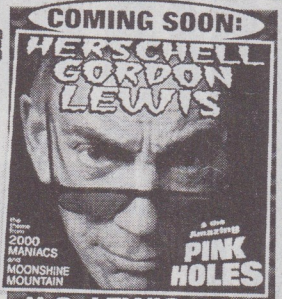

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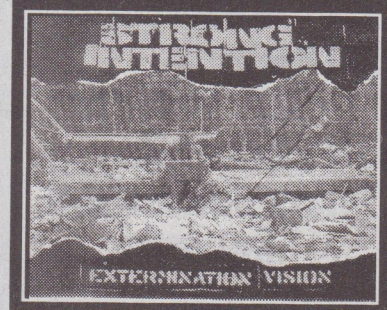

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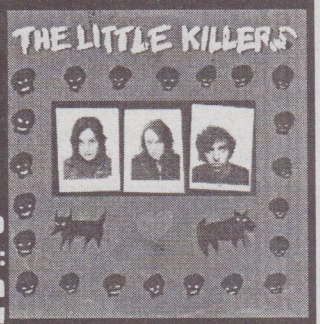

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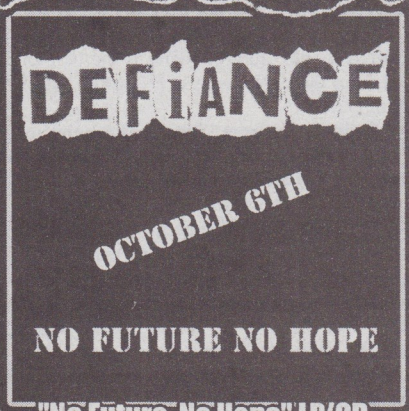

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Scene reports

Punk Scene in Northern Finland
by Pekka Laurikkala

Greetings from here in Northern Finland! I'm gonna tell you about the punk scene in Northern Finland. Let's start with the city of Kemi, where I live.

The most famous band from here is Kuolema, whose story is told in *MRR* #239. The second most famous is Eristetyt—they played Finnish HC '82-style music at the beginning, then started playing slower punk rock. It was Clash-style for some time. Eristetyt was in the scene in 1989-1994 and then broke up. They made four 7" EPs. The band's guitarist Säärelä moved later to South Finland and started Eristetyt again in city of Tampere in 1996. They made two CDs after that. Most people say that Eristetyt plays the same kind of punk rock as Kohu-63 from Finland. Contact Säärelä: Insinöörinkatu 64 a 22, FIN-33720 Tampere.

Back to Kemi: Helluntaiherätys was formed in 1988 and they too played Finnish HC '82-style music, like Lama, Kaaos, and Riistetyt. They mainly played in Northern Finland with Eristetyt. Swemba from Tuomiopäivän Lapset-HC-band played in the band in 1990. In same year, Helluntaiherätys broke up. The guys in the band liked drinking alcohol. After Helluntaiherätys, they formed Odotus, a Joy Division-style dark band. It broke up at 1992. After that they formed Kutti's Crew, an art-rock band that broke up in mid 90s because some of the guys stopped being interested in playing music. The original singer-guitarist and bassist of Helluntaiherätys died in the 90s. Otto Itkonen, from Forca Macabra and Selfish, will release their demos on a CD. You really should buy it, if you love Finnish HC '82-style music. Contact Otto: Oitkonen@cc.joensuu.fi . Address: Mörri Records, Maauunintie 19 F 45, FIN-01450 Vantaa, Finland

Epäjärkkärit was formed in 1991. It was same kind of punk rock that old Finnish punk bands played in the late 70s. They mainly played in Kemi. They made two demos, in 1992 and 1993. They broke up in 1997, because they didn't have a place to practice. I think they were a good band. But in the 90s, punk was mostly dead in Kemi—there were only some stupid pop punk bands, so I'm not gonna talk more about them.

After 2000, punk has started to live again in Kemi. Scum-Make, a crust guy, organizes gigs at Kemi, and he is also in several organizations, like lefty groups and antimilitaristic action. He played drums in GDFH (Good Day For a Holocaust), a crust/grind band that was in scene in the early 2000s. The band broke up for two reasons: Some of guys had go into the army doing their military service, and later they moved to the other side of Finland. GDFH had only two gigs in Kemi. Power It Up Records, from Germany, is gonna release their 7" EP soon. GDFH was fantastic! I think they played the same kind of music as the British Doom and old Extreme Noise Terror. Check their website: gdfh.cjb.net.

Cretin Family is a Ramones-style band from Kemi. They started in the early 2000s as a Ramones-cover band, but nowadays they play their own songs too. They are gonna have one song on a Finnish/Swedish compilation LP of Ramones-style bands. Web: koti.mbnet.fi/~jaro.

Real Vacation is also from Kemi. They are a Ramones/Social Distortion-style band. They have played all over Finland and made two CDRs. People have said that Real Vacation is the Ramones of Finland. Web: www.therealvacation.com .

Aivopesukone formed in 1999. They are heavy metal guys, but they started play hardcore, because their guitarist had go to military service. They have made few demos. Their influences are Terveet Kädet and Shitter Limited, but I think they play noisy hardcore. They only have two basses and drums. They haven't made any gigs. They still play hardcore, even their heavy metal guitarist is no longer in the army. Hope they get a record deal.

Clash City Rockers is Clash-cover band from Kemi. They have played gigs mainly in Kemi. I think that they do very good Clash covers, even though they are young guys. Scum-Make plays drums in CCR. Web: www.clashcityrockers.net.

25 kilometres from Kemi towards the Swedish border is Tornio. Terveet Kädet is the best-known band from there. Nowadays, TK works out of the city of Oulu.

Etulinja is from Tornio. Etulinja means "Frontline" in English. They sing by Finnish and they are a very anarchistic band. They always play with masks on their faces. The band members have been in protests, like Göteborg 2001, and they are also very active in politics. I think that the Finnish secret police, Supo, are very interested in Etulinja. Roku Records, from the city of Rovaniemi, is gonna release their debut 7" EP soon. Etulinja started in the early 2000s. Web: forward.to/etulinja.

In the 90s, Tuomiopäivän Lapset, a HC band was around—that band was also from Tornio. They released several 7" EPs. Nowadays it's buried.

The other HC-band was Kansandemokratia—they released a few 7" EPs and a 10". It's nowadays also buried. But you can contact those members of Kansandemokratia at SUPO Records: PO Box 83, Fin-90101 Oulu, Finland.

The city of Oulu is 100 kilometres to the south of Kemi. Oulu is biggest city in Northern Finland. In the 90s, there were a lot of punks and activity in Oulu. Nowadays it's not like it used to be. Throwback is an HC band from Oulu. Some people have said that they play the same style of HC as Skitsystem and Wolfbrigade. I think they play hardcore with a little influences of metal. Throwback was formed in 1998-1999. They have also played gigs in Southern Finland. Supo-Records released their debut 7" EP in 2002.

Red Cabaret is an emo punk band from Oulu. They have played several gigs. They played at Finland's biggest punk-festival, "Puntala-Rock," in

2002. The same year they made their debut CDEP. You can order it from SUPO-Records. Because Oulu is a big city and there are also many refugees, there are also nazi skinheads. They are just a bunch of stupid assholes that just want to beat up different kinds of people. Most citizens of Oulu hate them. They have said that in Oulu there should be AFA-action, but I don't think anything will happen. In Oulu there are also anarchistic and anti-fascistic organizations. These organizations don't have much activity.

But back to the music. Terveet Kädet is also from Oulu, but nowadays they don't have a record deal. Nowadays they don't play a lot of gigs. I saw Terveet Kädet in Tornio in the fall of 2002 and they were awesome! I know Terveet Kädet's vocalist Läjä personally, but I don't know what he is doing nowadays. Perhaps he has a blues band? Hah, hah!

Totuus is also from Oulu. They play Finnish HC '82-style of music. Totuus is formed in the mid 90s. They have made four 7" EPs and have been on several compilations. Contact Totuus: Fight Records, Hikivuorenkatu 17 D 36, FIN-33710 Tampere, Finland. Totuus has played in the biggest punk festivals in Finland and they have also toured in Europe. Rovaniemi is 100 kilometres from Kemi to the north. It's the capital of Finnish Lapland.

Laybacks is from there also—they are an Oi!/streetpunk-band.

Yhteiskunnan Ystävät? is Finnish HC '82-style band, and they have anarchistic lyrics. They sing in Finnish.

Stiggan Andersson is Finnish-sung punk rock with anarchistic lyrics.

Every one of these bands made a 7" EP in 2002 and those EPs are published by Roku Records. You can contact them and ask those EPs from here: Roku Records, Poroelontie 1 A 3, FIN-96100 Rovaniemi, Finland.

Kajaani is a town southeast of Oulu. The Carnival, a Terveet Kädet-style thrash HC-band, is from there. They put out two EPs in 2002 and 2003. Läjä from Terveet Kädet has made lyrics and covers to their records. Web: thecarnival.cjb.net

You can also contact me if you are interested in bands from Kemi. Pekka Laurikkala, Takajärventie 30 H 52, FIN-94700 Kemi, Finland. Email: pekka.laurikkala@luukku.com.

Lesser Known Scenes Report

by Luk Haas

Remember the glorious 80s when scene reports came in monthly to *MRR* from around-the-world locations and punk was pinned on more and more countries' maps? Times have changed, and nowadays the internet has been providing a larger tribune with faster access to most new bands, and, as well, has permitted punk to permeate an even larger number of countries, with quite a variety of definitions... A few years ago I wrote a column detailing a few bands and albums I found remarkable enough due to their capacity of innovation or simply their pioneering of new geographical territories.

I just feel the time is ripe now for a small update on the world's lesser known punk scenes, in order to give you ideas and directions for further networking with new people and fellow punks in different cultural environments. Please also remember that for all its qualities, the internet is also home to a lot of fake bands and hoaxes. It's very easy for an American band to simply register themselves as originating from say, Afghanistan, in order to get more attention, as a joke, or by sheer stupidity... so beware and use your judgement when surfing, and do a bit of research. All bands mentioned here are genuine!

I'll start off in the "**Far North**" (sorry for the geocentric point of view). In **Greenland**, the past years have seen a few bands being born that started hammering down the walls of local soft rock conformism, while expressing themselves in Inuktitut, their local language. The most successful band there is **SIISSISOQ** (www.siissisoq.gl), bringing a mix of thrash and punk. They released two CDs on the local indie label **Ulo Music** (www.ulomusic.dk). "Siissisoq" means "Rhinoceros" and was chosen after one band member did a student exchange trip to Zimbabwe. Younger bands like **FIASSUIT** haven't released anything yet, but already managed to tour Italy! **WRECK'N'GUNNA** seems to have disbanded following the departure of its members to Denmark to study.

In the **Faroe Islands**, local punk band **200**, now famous for shocking local population with lots of abusive words in the local language, has finally released their first album simply titled *200%*, on local indie label **Tutl Records** (www.tutl.com). This is the first ever Faroese punk record!

Scenes in the outer regions of the former **USSR** are developing tremendously, and several punk bands can be found in **Kyrgyzstan** (**KATAK**, **DAZDRAPERMA**), **Uzbekistan,** and **Kazakhstan's ADAPTATSIYA** has now released its second CD on **Solntse Records** in Russia, and it is worth checking out (distributed by www.tamizdat.org). **Chechen** new wave/punk band **BEK KHAN** is now exiled in Moscow, and has not been able to release its two recorded albums. Their songs are available for download at their site www.bekhan.ru, and include very moving lyrics about war and the desperate situation of their republic. They are heavily influenced by Soviet legendary band KINO. **TSE TSE** are wreaking havoc in **Tatarstan's** city of Nizhnekamsk, where humanistic punks **VITAMIN ROSTA** have recorded brand new songs and are looking for help to release them (www.narod.ru/vitaminrosta). Neighbouring republics of **Bashkortostan** and **Udmurtia** have developing scenes too (a split 7" should appear on Tian An Men 89 Records at some point. **Jason Flower**, of Canada's Mexican Power Authority's fame is allegedly preparing a full LP of punk and underground **Georgian** bands' historical materials (that's the Caucasus Georgia, a.k.a. Sakartvelo/Gruziya, not the US State). **YAT-KHA**, of the republic of **Tuva**, have relased four CDs now on a variety of labels, and I recommend checking out the first one, *Yenisei-punk* (released in Finland by Global Music Centre), and the last one, *Bootleg live in Europe* (self-released), where you can enjoy their incredible mix of punk and Tuvan throat singing and folk at its best. Their albums are quite easy to find, as they are distributed by mainstream shops. In neighbouring republic of **Buryatia**, **ORGAZM NOSTRADAMUSA** have established their reputation thanks to their signing by Moscow record label **Neuro Empire**, but they are said to be close to the nationalist scene, so better avoid them, and rather discover the amazing **IMPERYA SNEGOV**, that will appear on a split 7" on TAM89 records later this year. Punk, grindcore, flute, throat singing, and a pinch of hip-hop, all mixed together, for an incredible, wonderful result. The fury of **Yakutia's CHOLBON's** psychedelic, shamanistic rock has not been heard for years now and many are wondering what's happening in the music scene of **Republic Sakha** (as Yakutia is now officially known today.

We jump to **Mongolia**, where punk grungesters **NISVANIS** have released at least one CD (www.nisvanis.com), and more bands like **JACKAL** are now playing out. The first **Maltese** punk compilation has been released on CDR with a professionally printed full color cover by a new local punk label, **Reciprocal Records**, and includes about 20 local bands recorded at the local yearly punk festival. **Cyprus' NUCLEAR MUTANTS** seem to have disappeared from the face of the earth.

The greatest **Turkish** punk band ever, **RASHIT**, just released their second album on vinyl on **Darbouka Records** (monsite.wanadoo.fr/darbouka). We have seen also recent releases of Turkish 60s garage band compilations, of which *Turkish Delights* and *Hava Narghile,* are worth tracing down (look at Aquarius Records in SF). They include masterpieces by **ERKIN KORAY, BARIS MANCO, SILUETLER, MOGOLLAR,** and countless others.

The **Nepali** scene is developing: **RAIKORIS** (www.geocities.com/raikoris) self-released more albums, and a cassette on Indonesia's **No Label Records.** They also toured Malaysia and France last year, and are planning to go back to Southeast Asia this year and keep the flame of DIY punk alive in Katmandu. **INSIDE TWO STOOPID TRIANGLES** is back with a vengeance, a new album and a new website: www.geocities.com/officialstoopid). They recently played in Nepal's second city, Pokhara, and are planning a tour of India with Indian punksters **TRIPWIRES. 5th GRADE DROPOUT** are the latest addition to the thriving Himalayan punk scene.

Another scene that has witnessed a tremendous explosion of bands in recent years (numbering in the hundreds of releases!) is **Indonesia**. Check out the Indonesian punk discography at www.tam89records.0catch.com). Punk bands are now recording and gigging in the countries' remotest provinces including war-torn **Aceh** (**ALAKAZAM**), **Kalimantan/Borneo** (especially in the city of Balikpapan), **Sulawesi, Bali, Lombok,** and **Riau.** Numerous Indonesian punk website are present on the web.

In the **South Pacific**, a seemingly important scene has emerged over the past four years in **Tahiti**, with the pop-punk band **SNOCUD** having released two albums (www.snocud.pf), and more bands gigging around.

In the **South Atlantic,** blues-rock still seems the order of the day in the **Falkland Islands**, with local band **FIGHTING PIG** (www.fightingpigband.com) letting the steam out in local bar **The Trough** in Port Stanley. The **Cameroonian** bikutsi-rock scene made of mohawk-sporting punksters **LES TETES BRULEES** and veterans **GENERAL ATEBASS ET LES MARTIENS** seems to have receded a bit.

In **Botswana**, local thrashers **METAL ORIZON** have released a CD, but this might prove difficult to locate. This is one of the first local underground releases (except maybe for **NOSEY ROAD,** but they were more like mainstream).

Most bands in **Zimbabwe** have now emigrated due to the extreme political and economic climate there. **URBAN ZOO** members are now reported in Australia and others in the UK.

In **Namibia**, up to now, metal is still the only dish on the menu with bands like **ARCANA XXII.**

The **Algerian** punk scene that appeared in the late 80s with bands like **KHINDJAR**, **RASCASS,** or **NAMELESS** seems to have disappeared to make space for extreme metal (check **LITHAM**'s site at http://litham.fr.st). Unfortunately no recordings seem to have been preserved of these pioneers of North African punk.

Likewise, in **Jordan**, punk band **SEIZURE** has vanished and the metal scene developed further. Samir of local **Underground Records** plans a Jordanian underground metal comp CD (underground_records@yahoo.com).

In the tiny principality of **Andorra**, in the middle of Europe's Pyrenees mountains, a punk band has been formed in the town of Sant Julia de Loria. They are called **WEESHIRT** and play pop-punk. They released a 7" on **Darbouka Records** in France (darbouka@netcourrier.com). They keep the flame of punk alive in this otherwise techno-infested valleys (www.weeshirt.com).

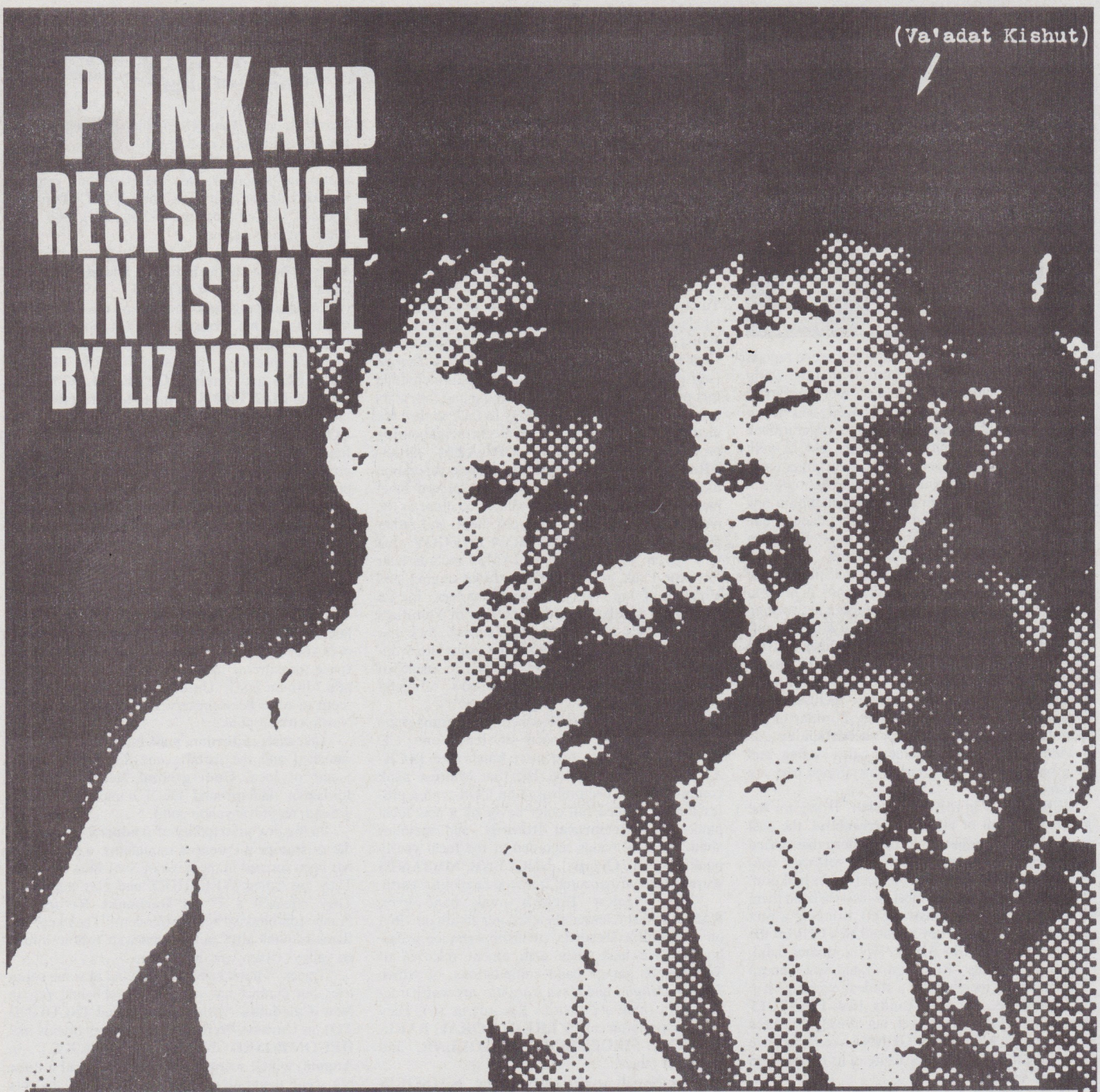
Traces of punk bands were found in some countries but contact has not been established yet: in **New Caledonia** (with a band called **INCOGNITO**), in **Curacao/Netherlands Antilles** (bands like **DECOMPOSED MILK** and **N.A.T.A.**), in **Angola**, which seems to have or have had a quite big scene made up of mostly high school students (**ACROMANIACOS** and **ANEXO** seems to have disbanded now after members went to Portugal to attend university), in **Morocco** (**STRANGELS,** representing punk in this country where a dozen of metal band members were arrested recently and thrown into jail for allegedly propagating "ideas dangerous to Islamic faith"), in **Egypt** (a gig had been announced for some local metal and hardcore bands by www.gDr2.com), in **Lebanon** (**NEGATIVE**), the **Dominican Republic** (**POKET**, **JLS** and others), or **El Salvador** (**REDD**)...

I know this is very much a partial picture, but I hope it will wake up scenesters in those countries and others, and make them contribute to *MRR* with more detailed reports, interviews, and contacts. I also know there are no postal addresses here, but the reality is that e-mail has almost completely replaced the slow postal services these days.

Peace to all, Luk Haas
Tian An Men 89 Records
www.geocities.com/tam89rds/

PUNK AND RESISTANCE IN ISRAEL

BY LIZ NORD



"Punk's Not Dead" has been a rallying cry for years now, and I think it would be easy to argue that, in the States at least, punk *is* actually on its way to the graveyard. I even saw an article in *The New York Times* recently describing how MTV is trying to make punk the "new hip-hop" in terms of completely saturating the market with anything sounding remotely three-chord-esque. In my book, there's nothing much punk about that. I recently returned, however, from a place where I believe that punk's *not* dead. That place is a tumultuous little country called Israel. I spent the month of June shooting an independent documentary about the scene there, and I will share some of my impressions in this article.

Like the country itself, the punk scene in Israel is small, young, and passionate. Many of you probably know that there is some kind of scene in Israel, especially if you read the scene reports in this here magazine. Even non-*MRR* readers have probably at least heard something about the Israeli Kung-Fu Records band, Useless ID. Their accomplishments, which include touring the US and Europe several times, seem even more impressive now that I have witnessed the scene that they sprouted from.

With the exception of Useless ID, most bands in Israel play with very little hope of recouping their costs, let alone making a profit. Alternative culture in general is in its infancy in Israel, so there are very few venues, practice spaces, or independent recording studios. Most of the mainstream venues pay the bands little to nothing when they play there. Furthermore, most of the bands don't have records or merchandise to sell. It was strange for me to go to shows without the typically ever-present merch tables covered in t-shirts, 7"s and buttons. One beacon of light is the Fastmusic label (www.fastmusic.co.il), which puts out some punk, indie rock, garage, and noise, and also runs the only club in Tel Aviv that invites onto its stage any young band who wants to play. The fact that the living room-sized club, which also hosts a recording studio and practice space in back, is run by musicians on the label, led one band member to compare it to an Israeli Kibbutz.

Despite the limited exposure and lack of profitability, the punk scene in Israel is thriving. The scene is following the historic punk route from other countries, where it becomes even stronger when the political or social situation in the area is intensified. In fact, three or four new bands had their debut shows while I was in the country. This is a big number, considering that there are only around 40 bands in the whole scene. The younger bands are a really promising group of punk idealists, many of whom oppose mandatory military service and some Israeli governmental policies. One example is the hardcore band called *Kafa la Panim Shel Limor Livnat*, who, despite their newness, have already stirred up controversy in the Israeli press due to their name. It means "Slap Limor Livnat's Face," and Ms. Livnat happens to be Israel's Minister of Education.

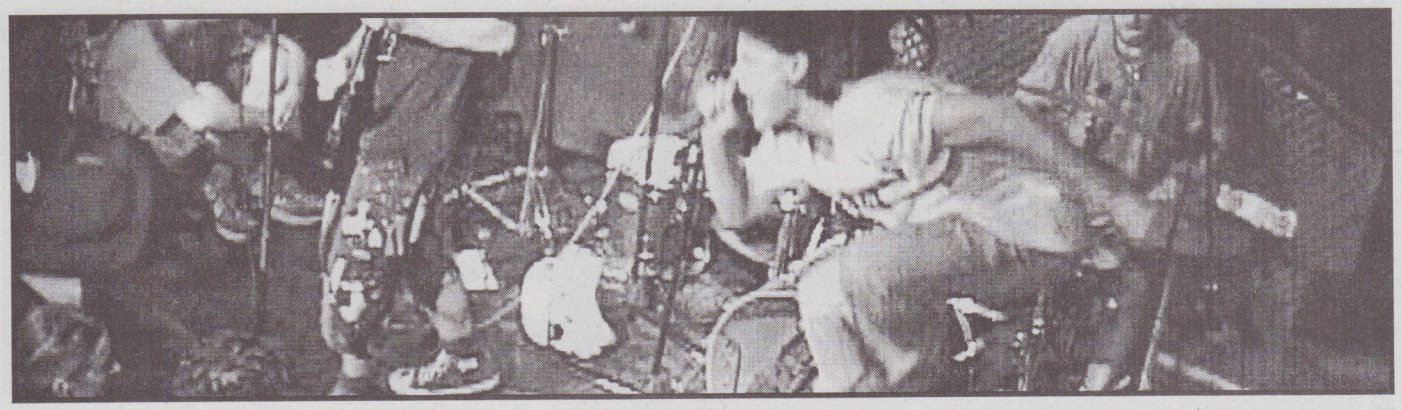
One of the more interesting younger bands I saw is called Va'adat Kishut, or "Decoration Committee." They are an all-female (except for their new drummer, Nadav) hardcore band who "decorate" each of their performances with cheap gimmicks, such as throwing glitter and confetti on the crowds. Because the scene in Israel is still in its early stages, many of the bands are not doing anything particularly unique—their music styles and performances mimic bands that they may have heard from abroad. *Va'adat Kishut,* however, has a different philosophy. As the lead singer, Jackie, explained to me, "It's not only a punk band, or a girl band. It's a whole artistic concept. It has to do with us being people who make music. We make art. We make zines...Punk is about breaking the grayness."

Just about every punk sub-genre is accounted for in Israel, even if it's by only a few bands each. Ska-punk, which was apparently discovered in Israel not too long ago, is played by bands like Smash4$ and Beer7. There's street punk (Chaos Rabak, the Dead Rabins), hardcore (Soon in Here, *Nikmat Olalim*), metal (*Betzefer*), and pop punk, too (Useless ID, Punk Ache). One of the biggest schisms in the scene is between the more politically active bands, and those who just play for fun. This divide exists in most scenes, but it seems particularly poignant in a place as politically charged as Israel. It was easy for me to understand both sides, when hearing about it from various band members. Guy and Ishay from Useless ID described that they play poppy love songs, rather than anti-occupation rants, because their lives are sunk so deeply in the political situation already. They want to use their music as a means of escape from that harsh reality. Guy did give a nod to the political bands in Israel, however, stating, "What's there to be against or protest against in fucking Switzerland? It's so peaceful." Indeed, the political hardcore bands in Israel feel that they have a responsibility to voice their opinions disapproving of everything from the Israeli Occupation to the Religious Right, especially at a time when public criticism of governmental policy is so heavily frowned upon. As Giora, the singer of *Nikmat Olalim,* put it, "There are some countries where the headline news is a couple getting married or a fisherman or something. Here, there are actually things happening and you actually have a chance to change things really dramatically."

One thing that unites punks of all styles is a distrust, and often outright rejection, of the Israeli Army. In Israel, mandatory military service for all citizens begins at age 18, right after high school graduation. (This excludes ultra-religious Jews, who are exempted from service in order to study religious law.) Boys serve for three years and girls for about two, and men are required to do one month of reserve service every year until they reach their forties. Military service can include anything from doing administrative jobs to full-on combat in hostile territories or countries. Punks' reasons for not wanting to join range from opposing war as a means to peace, to just plain not wanting to be told what to do every day for three of their formative years. One of the only ways to avoid service, however, is to undergo intensive psychological testing and be deemed a psychopath by the Military Psychiatrist. This is the route that many punks take. David, from *Nikmat Olalim,* explained that it's pretty easy to be categorized as insane because, "If you're not interested in going into the Army, you're already an outcast." David is 18, and like many of his fellow punks, he just barely avoided military recruitment this year after his visit to the psychiatrist.

Once a young person is let out of service on a mental basis, their national ID card is permanently stamped with this fact. This can affect their ability to get certain jobs, and hinder other basic rights, as well as affecting how fellow citizens view or treat them. However, if they *do* join, they are likely to be placed in a life-threatening situation to defend a position that may be against their ethical beliefs, and to fight people with whom they would rather try to find peace. Therefore, the decision to opt-in or out of military service is one laden with consequences for young Israelis.

Refusal to join the Army is not the only thing that makes punks feel outcast in Israel. While a mohawk may no longer turn heads in the US, it still looks radical in the Holy Land. Kaban, from Chaos Rabak, described how he was thrown in solitary confinement in a military jail for 34 days because he refused to



shave his mohawk and remove his piercings when he was being recruited for the Army. Ori, Chaos Rabak's singer, claimed that the police harass and sometimes arrest him for no reason other than his dramatic, tattooed appearance. It's hard to tell in Tel Aviv—a bustling modern city filled with extremely trendy young people—but religious tradition still does influence Israeli society, and in Jewish tradition, tattoos are a no-no. Despite these incidents, Israel is probably the only country in the region where a punk scene could exist to the extent that it does, being that it is the Middle East's only democracy.

A factor that unites punks and "normal" Israelis, and affects everyone in the region, is the rash of suicide bombings that has occurred over the past two years. It is impossible to write about Israel without mentioning the attacks. It is equally impossible to meet someone in the country who has not been affected in some way by a bombing. The punk scene was rocked last year when one of the singers of veteran band *Ha Pussy Shel Lussy* was killed in a blast. Useless ID told a story of one of their biggest fans, a teenage girl who was dancing in the front row at their show in Jerusalem, and three days later was blown up on a bus. Still, people were amazingly nonchalant about the situation. I lost count of the number of times I heard the phrase, "You get used to it." Dennis, the lead singer of Smash4$, pointedly described how attitudes have changed since the beginning of the *Intifada*. He said that if twenty people were killed in a bombing two years ago, only sad songs played on the radio and the whole country was in mourning. Now, bombings and deaths are so commonplace that a news anchor will briefly mention twenty people dying and then move on to the next topic of the day's events.

Any discussion on the suicide bombings and the complicated political situation surrounding them would naturally include discussion of the Palestinians. However, most of the interviews I did skirted around the issue. The Israeli punks are generally sympathetic to the Palestinian cause, but they don't necessarily think that the "Roadmap" solution of having two separate states (one Jewish Israeli, one Muslim Palestinian) is the best one. Most fear that this separation will lead to further mistrust between the two peoples. Though mainly Jewish by birth, virtually none of the punks practice the religion. This is true of the rest of the country as well—it's a secular majority with only 15% of the population being highly religiously observant Jews. Most punks have a hope that both sides could loosen their religious beliefs enough to be able to comfortably share the land. They tend to see religion as the root of the problem, without blaming either side in particular. If anything, they lay more blame on their own government for exacerbating a difficult situation for their Palestinian neighbors. Despite the recent talks between the Israeli and new Palestinian leaders, and the relative calm in the area, most people I spoke with still have little hope for a positive change anytime soon.

With the seemingly hopeless political situation, mandatory military service, and dominant religious traditions, you can begin to understand why punk still feels important in Israel. I think a lot of people have different definitions of what "punk" is or what "punk rock" means to them. In the Holy Land, however, there is one dominant statement made by punks from all different parts of the scene—from pop to political. Punk rock is freedom. I think the feeling is best summed up in the following conversation between members of the street punk band Chaos Rabak:

Oren: People need a alternative here. It's important to Israel. All Israelis go like that (makes a straight line in air). They don't think.
Assi: I think everybody got a revolution in his heart. It's just...you have the laws. You have education. You have all this stuff preventing people from going to be free. Punk, it's free. It's freedom
Ori: Punk, it's songs. It's art. And Israel, it's a small country, and us, as punks, people don't like it. Society don't like it. But if your song is good, so it's art and people want to hear it. You can't fight it.

Needless to say, I think it's an important time to tell the story of the punk/resistance movement in Israel. I learned so much by being there, and met so many inspiring people. I and am still sorting out all of my thoughts and figuring out how to make an interesting documentary. I now have twenty-five hours of footage to go through and start editing. If you want to follow my progress, get in touch, or donate to this completely independent project which still badly needs funding, please check out the website at: www.uselessmovie.com.

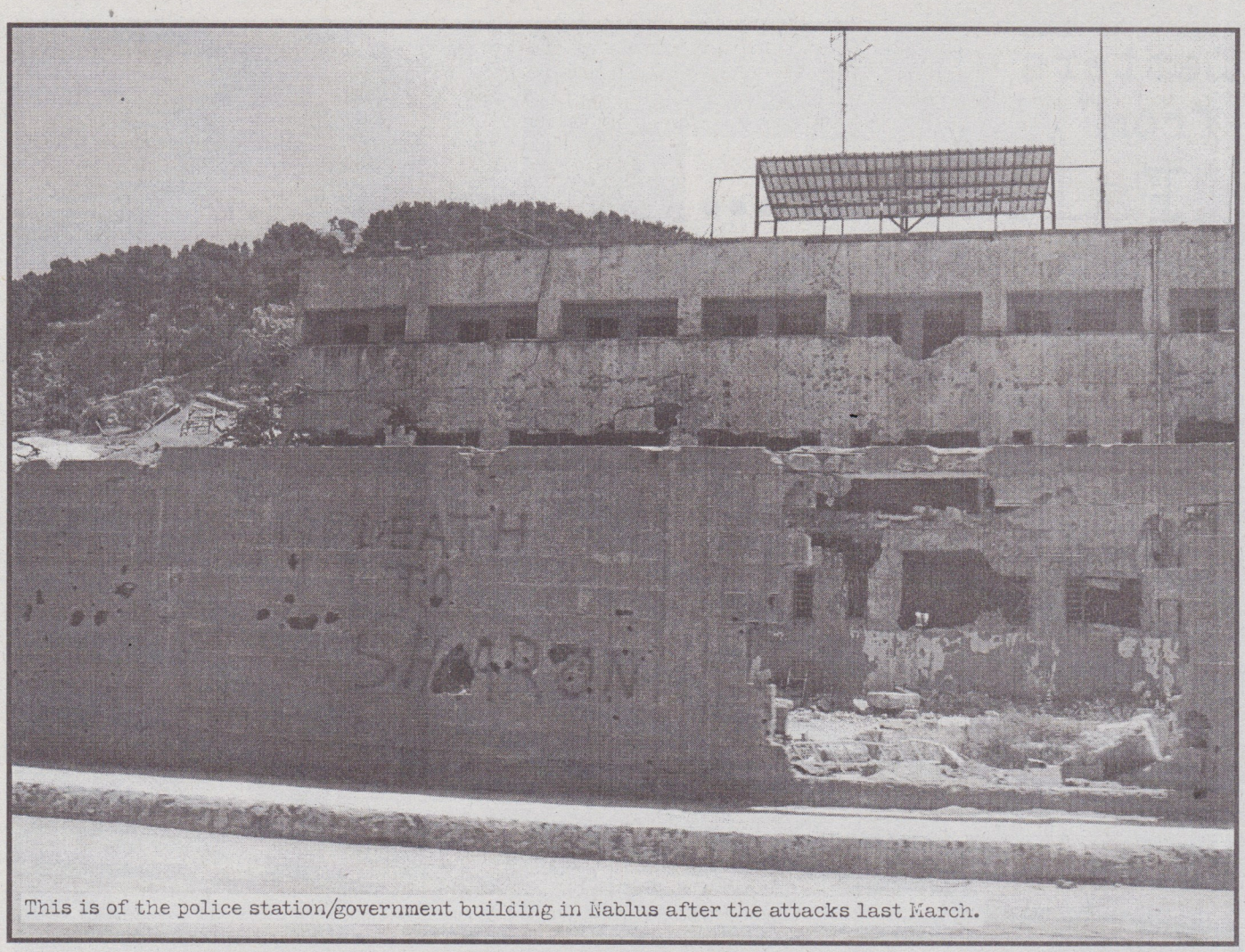
Letters from Palestine...

This picture is from Huarta. It's of two men being detained at the main checkpoint leading in to Nablus.

This summer I went with a friend to the West Bank section of Palestine to do solidarity work with a group called the International Solidarity Movement. We are both New Yorkers who have been involved with Palestinian solidarity work for some time, as well as other grassroots organizing efforts. I spent two weeks in people's homes in villages and refugee camps, helping out where I could, listening to stories of lives torn apart by the fighting, and learning so much. I met amazing people along the way, both Israeli and Palestinian, and the experience left me changed. The following are reports I wrote home to friends and family while I was there—trying to give them a sense of what life is like under occupation; trying to put a human face on a very inhumane situation. Because that is what we need to do—Americans who go to Palestine, or Columbia, or Chiapas—we need to come back and tell stories abut what our tax dollars are doing to people in our names, and we need to build resistance here, and we need to say enough is enough.

—Sean Sullivan

-Photos by Jay Onyszchuk



This is of the police station/government building in Nablus after the attacks last March.

June 20th 2003

Friends,

After a painless journey through Israeli security, Joe and I are safely in East Jerusalem. One of the people we were supposed to meet was delayed in reaching Israel, and we spent the first night a little lost, and very overwhelmed, until we found a couple of fellow activists from the States who updated us on the situation on the ground here. There is so much work to do, such as work against the building of the wall around the West Bank that is further destroying Palestinian communities and shrinking the land that the Palestinians can call their own. There is also the fight for clean water in the refugee camps, the work to end the demolition of people's homes, media work to challenge what the major news outlets are telling us. There is so much to fight against and to build it can be overwhelming, and Joe and I are working out now how we can be most effective.

Jerusalem is a divided city, but everywhere you see the soldiers. The only difference is the in East Jerusalem (the Palestinian area), they are stopping cars, and asking for ID, and in West Jerusalem (Israeli side), they are guarding bus stops. None of it makes me feel safe. In the West you see posters championing the "Hilltop Youth"—young settlers who take over Palestinian land, and in the East you see small children selling chewing gum to tourists, trying to make a little money.

Today we went to the Jerusalem Pride event with a group of Israeli social justice activists called "Black Laundry," or "Dirty Laundry." The pun is lost in translation, but it refers to being the black sheep of the family if you are queer. The group was founded two years ago, but Arab Israelis (meaning Arabs who live within the State of Israel), and Jews began to fight around various issues of social justice. Poverty, LGBT rights, Palestinian Solidarity, and many others. Today we built a wall out of poster board exclaiming different anti-occupation messages—"Build Bridges Not Walls," and "Make Love Your Only Occupation," etc.—and blocked, symbolically at least, the entryway to the park where the event was being held. The media attention was extraordinary. We were surrounded by news cameras like I have never been at a demonstration in the United States, and because we were largely white, and Jewish, the soldiers and police left us alone. The situation would have been much different if more of us had been Palestinian. Reactions varied from screaming hatred to applause and approval, but Black Laundry fares less well when they pull similar actions in Tel Aviv. Often they have been targeted and singled out by the police, but they have continued to take a strong stand against the occupation. The approval and support Black Laundry received today betrays the myth that all of Israel supports the occupation. In fact the truth is quite different.

We are leaving for Nablus tomorrow, I will of course keep you all up to date on what happens from there.

Love,
Sean

June 23, 2002

Friends,

The family really has no say in the matter. The IDF arrived six months ago and said their house was in a strategic location, and they were going to need it. A beautiful home overlooking the valley that surrounds the Palestinian village of Sarah was worth a lot to the Israelis, I guess. They moved in, raised an Israeli flag over this Palestinian family's home, mounted machine guns on the roof, and began to use the house as a checkpoint. Holding people in the handcuffs in the front yard, firing burst of machine gun fire off the roof in the middle of the night for no reason other than target practice, and forcing the Salem family, all nine of them, to live in two rooms on the bottom floor without ever asking permission, compensating them, or saying when, if ever, they are going to leave. This is life under occupation, and it is sickening.

Daniel and Andreas (two international activists from Sweden) and I went there to stay with the family yesterday, after meeting with the community leaders of a nearby village

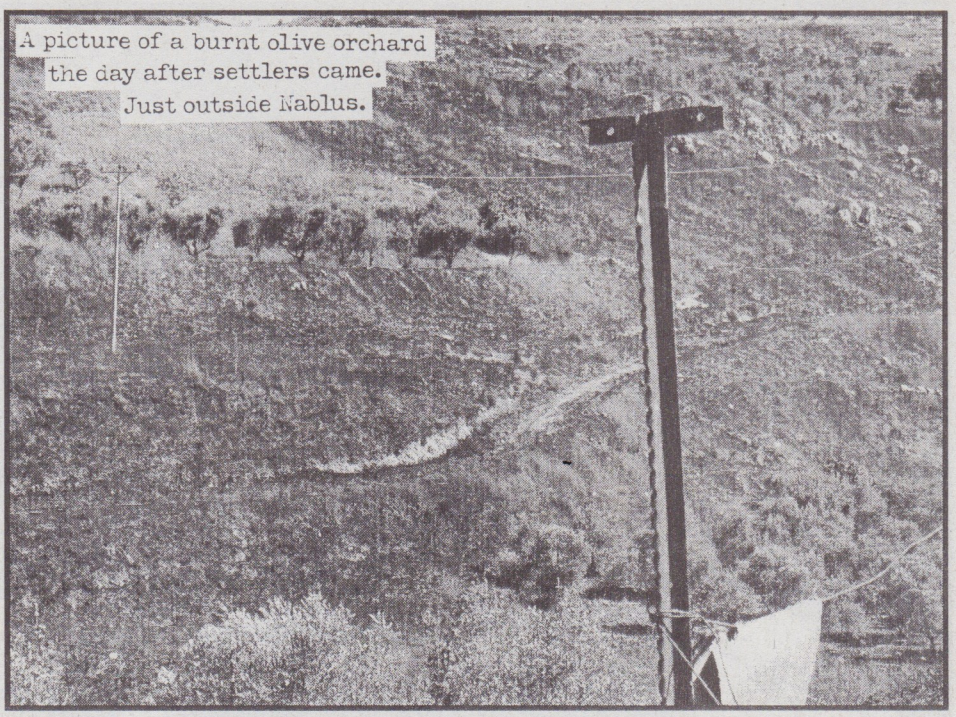
called Til who haven't been able to get their main products—milk and figs—through the checkpoints that surround the village for the last couple of months, placing unbelievable strain on the economy of the village. The family had asked for international activists to come and stay with them in the hope that if the soldiers knew we were there, they might behave better—might not bring arrested men into the house or fire the machine guns all night. Perhaps we could find out what they couldn't—when were they going to leave?

While we were having drinks on the patio, the captain of the squad that was occupying the house came down to talk to us. Out of either politeness or fear, the mother of the house served him tea, which he took and then thanked her in Arabic. We asked him when they were leaving, and he said he didn't know. We asked him if they were going to pay the family compensation, and he said no, perhaps they would get paid back for the electricity the army had used, and if there was any damage. He told me, "I don't like this, you know. I feel bad about this, I have a family, and if this was happening to them, I would hate it." And I'm sure he meant it. He desperately wanted us to believe that it wasn't his fault, that he was not to blame, but I'll admit I gave him no absolution. The ability to say to yourself that you're only following orders can allow a person to do terrible things.

Well-fed and well rested, we awoke the next morning to another soldier threatening the father of the house. When he saw us, the solider left, but we knew what he had said. This is not a good idea; things can get worse for you, don't cause any trouble. And so scared and worried that they may get kicked out of their own home all together, he asked us to leave. Nothing makes you feel more powerless.

The night before, looking out over the valley with so many more stars than we ever see in New York, they gave us tea. The youngest brother told us that soon he would be joining one of the other sons soon, in Kansas. Another young Palestinian doing the only thing the lucky can—leaving, further draining the pool of resources this country has. And I said how terrible this situation is, to have your house occupied, and the father said, "Yes, it is terrible, but at least they have no martyrs in the family, at least our house hasn't been bulldozed into rubble." In the face of having no house at all, like so many families in the West Bank, a house occupied by the enemy seems better. Small consolation.

Love,
Sean



June 26th 2003

Dear Friends,

I've never seen anyone who'd been shot before, and to be honest, I can go a lifetime now without seeing it again. He was maybe fifteen years old, maybe a little older, I don't know, and when I saw him he was on the ground crowded by Shabob (local teenagers) who lifted him up on to their shoulders and rushed him to the ambulances that had gotten through the APCs and the tanks, and then rushed him and the other boy away to the hospital. When it's rifles versus rocks, rifles win every time.

The boys had been throwing stones at an APC, a heavily armored small tank of sorts, which had parked itself at the end of Market Street where I am staying, for no reason I can understand. After about fifteen minutes of kids as young as eight throwing rocks at the APC, the soldiers fired two shots, dropping two kids to the ground. There were no warning shots, no tear-gas, no rubber bullets—just two kids on their way to the hospital.

Joe said this earlier, but I've been thinking it since this happened. I'd like someone to explain to me how exactly a dozen kids with rocks are a danger to an Armored Personnel Carrier and deserved to be killed. I'd like someone to sit down and tell me honestly that they think any of this makes sense, or that any good will come of another couple of Palestinian boys joining the masses already walking through Balata camp with scars that they show me when I go to the store, and ask me what Americans think of all this, and I have to say that most Americans don't care.

I leave Balata tomorrow; go past the same soldiers I've been arguing with for days, and head to Jerusalem. I will write again from there.

My love to you all,
Sean

Earlier, June 26th 2003

Dear Friends,

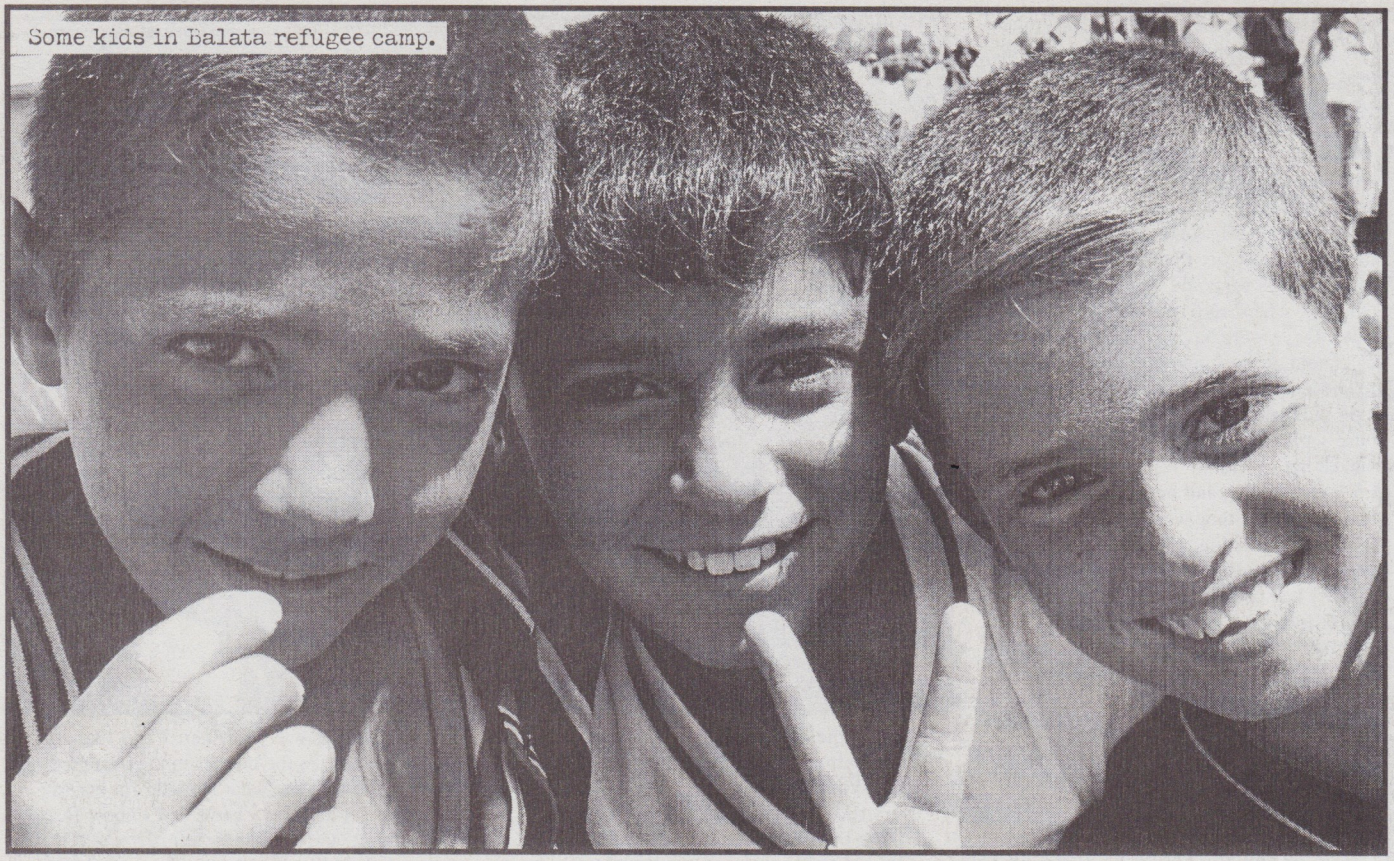
Internet access can be hard to come by, and is a valuable commodity here in Balata camp, I apologize for not writing many of you back individually, I will catch up with you all when I return. I wanted to share with you some of the work we've been doing, and some of what I've been feeling here today.

Pretty much every day here I feel like crying. Whether it's the mother in the occupied house who asks me what I can do for her to help her get her house back, and I know I can do nothing, and that the Israeli Army will leave when it feels like it and not a day sooner. Or when the father asks me why people in America don't seem to care about Palestine, and I have to tell him I don't know, I don't know.

Today, it was the man who—while we were waiting at another checkpoint for the teenagers with the high-powered machine guns to let the hundreds of people waiting go through the checkpoint—thanked me for coming to Palestine and for helping then; meanwhile I still haven't helped anyone get through this checkpoint today, and the positive feeling I had from clearing a roadblock in Balata this morning (the IDF builds them, we and the community of Balata take them down, we'll keep doing it too) had long since evaporated in the scorching sun.

The soldier is screaming through a bullhorn at people three inches from his face. Hundreds of people trying to go literarily ten minutes away are, instead of going on with their lives, sitting here waiting for the soldiers to change their minds. Nablus has been all but closed, with no one from the city being let out for days now. No one seems to know why, except to try and break a people's spirit. These checkpoints accomplish nothing expect to destroy peoples lives. They save no one.

I keep thinking about my grandmother, what I would think, what I would do, if soldiers stopped her from returning to her home, and told her good luck, find someplace to sleep tonight. It turns my stomach. Still, here in Nablus, she would find someplace to stay, someone would put her up for the night, give her sweetened tea and listen to her story of the checkpoint, and her hosts would share some stories of their own. She would sleep on a mattress on the floor, and try again tomorrow. I have never met people more giving and generous than these people who have next to nothing, and I can only hope that the future is different



Some kids in Balata refugee camp.

for them, and that the kids in Balata camp will play on paved streets, and go to school, and be able to leave Balata Camp whenever they choose.

I love you all and will write again soon.

Sean

July 4th, 2003

Dear Friends,

On my last night in Jerusalem, we walked down the Mount of Olives into the Old City at dusk—a beautiful view of a terribly troubled place. When we reached the bottom of the hill and entered East Jerusalem, the Palestinian neighborhood, we came across soldiers, and then we heard the singing.

A group of Israelis were heading our way under heavy military guard, singing and chanting while Palestinians were herded into their houses, and snipers were placed on rooftops. Appearing as tourists, we were allowed right next to the demonstration. (I was told that the night before a full moon, this group of Israeli Jews goes to each gate in Jerusalem and blesses it). The whole thing reminded me of the protestant Orange Men in Ireland marching through Catholic neighborhoods, well within their rights to insult and belittle a people. I was as frightened by this demonstration as I was in Balata when the soldiers were firing at Palestinians there. Here was another form of dehumanization and colonization, another attempt at erasing a people. There are no Palestinian marches through the Jewish quarter of Jerusalem, and this march had nothing to do with religion and everything to do with power. It sickened me. Using the power of the state, and the gun, to rub a people's nose in their oppression.

This is what I will take away with me:

*Images of soldiers not old enough to drink in America telling me that they don't care that she's eighty years old and has been sitting in the sun all day.

• The look on his face as they carried him on their shoulders after being shot for throwing stones at Armored Personnel Carriers, for throwing stones at small tanks.

*Searching for words, as people ask me again and again, "What do Americans think of what is going on here?" "Don't people care?" and I have no answers.

*Israeli teenagers singing and dancing while soldiers make a circle around them. Protecting them from whom? The people crouched in doorways, or beaten in a near by alley? (I saw this, the soldiers so brazen, they didn't even care that there was a foreigner with a camera there.) People peeking out their windows as spotlights scan the buildings, with Israeli snipers perch on their roofs?

*The unending generosity of people who have nothing; the food and tea, the places to sleep and patience with my lack of Arabic all given to me, an American who has everything. Struggling to accept the thank yous when I know that I've done so very little.

• The strength of the struggle against the occupation, of Israelis putting themselves on the line in solidarity, and of the Palestinians continuing their culture in the face of the world's third largest army, backed by the world's only super power.

When I came home yesterday, there were letters waiting for me from many friends. Letter of support in my email, and letters of support on the kitchen table from friends locked up here at home. I want to quote briefly what Emel, a friend in Auburn State Prison, wrote to me to put things in perspective: "It was funny that you had to go all the way to Palestine to experience what I'd experienced right in Brooklyn (looking down the barrel of a government issued weapon)…I wish I was there. That way when they pointed one of those government issued weapons at you, I could have yelled out 'Hey, he's not black—aim that thing at me, I'm used to it.'" In Auburn, Emel has been locked in his cell 24 hours a day for the last eight days at the whim of the guards. Another enclosure, another curfew, except this one's here in New York.

I get to come home, and there are no more checkpoints for me. The soldiers don't kick in my door anymore, but for Qusay in Balata and Emel from Bed Stuy, these things never stop. The struggle against occupation and oppression is global and the struggles are directly linked.

Now the real work begins. Joe and I are planning a small tour of the east coast to discuss all we've seen and try to raise some money to offset, in some little way, the poverty and lack of resources the Palestinians are facing. Though the effectiveness of internationals in Palestine is questionable, I do feel that my experiences there, the things I saw, the stories I heard and the people I met will make the work I do here in America that much stronger. No one can tell me they don't shoot at children—I know they do, I saw them. We hope to break into the small towns we come from and challenge what passes for the nightly news, and I hope to see you all, and thank you for your support and kind words while I was there.

With love,

Sean Sullivan.

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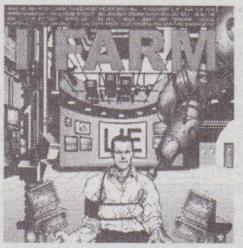

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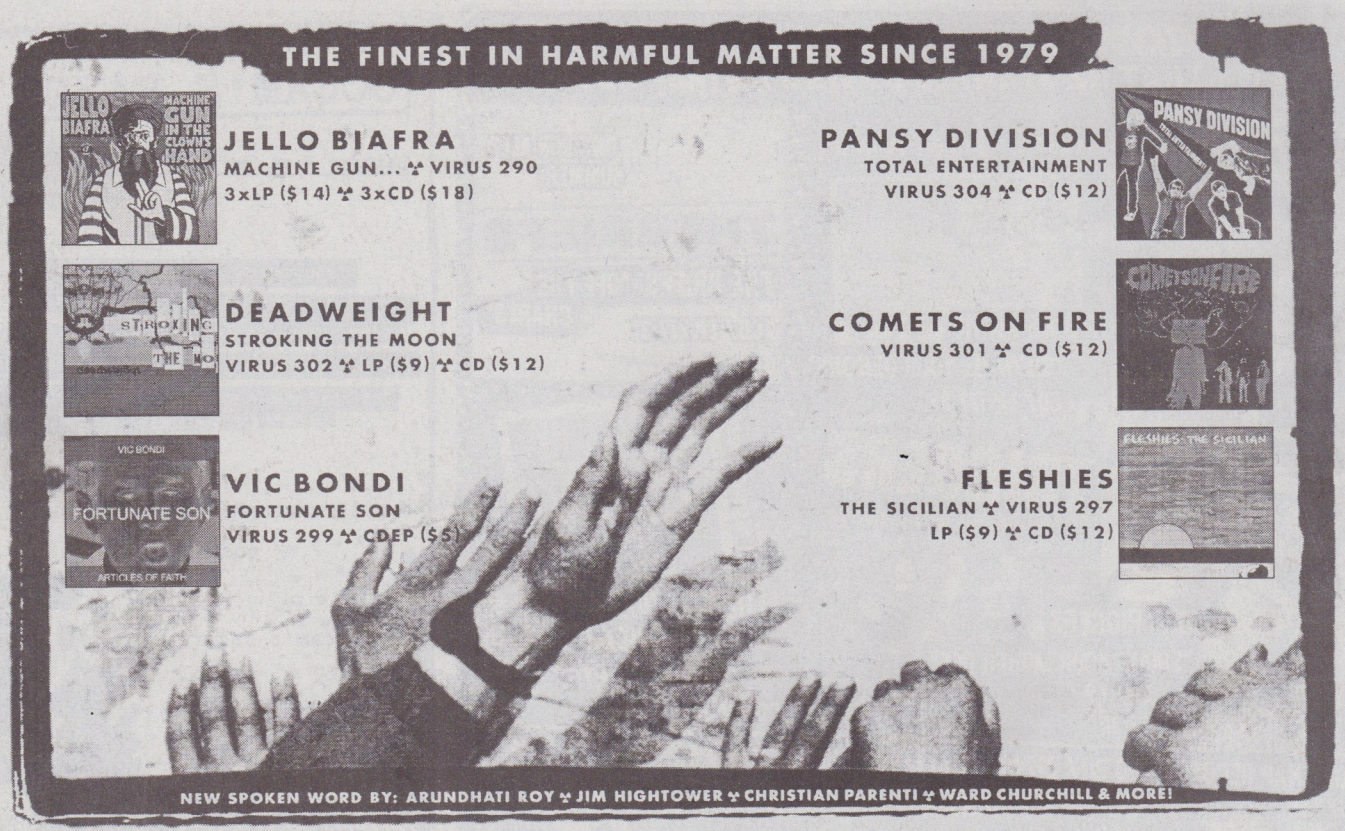

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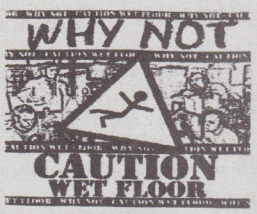

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NO CHOICE

Some twenty years after their initial formation, Welsh band NO CHOICE have finally released their debut album, 'Dry River Fishing'. Taking the sonic attack of HUSKER DU and the caustic bellow of LEATHERFACE, yet retaining a distinctly classic British Punk sound, it's an album that challenges world politics and questions individual integrity.
Interview by Steve Scanner

MRR: First off, Gagz-as someone who discovered punk rock way back in 1977, just tell us what attracted you to it and why you felt the need to get actively involved within the punk community at the stage that you did.

Gagz: The first time I heard "White Man In Hammersmith Palais" by The Clash on a jukebox I was blown away. I was 14 or 15 and on holiday, I kept asking my mum for more and more change. I'd play the other side, "The Prisoner," just as much, and "Roadrunner" by Jonathan Richman And The Modern Lovers. Back in Cardiff I started checking out our local indie shop and got to know people who were getting the same buzz I was getting. In school some kids were starting to wear the early obligatory clothing; borstal jackets, tighter trousers, white ruccanor ankle trainers and day-glo sparkly socks, haha! I just sort of grew into the punk thing. As far as getting into the "punk community," I was always myself, I never felt the need to cling to the in-crowd. I didn't have the money to buy all the regalia that deemed you in with the in-crowd. At that stage I'd started getting political, realizing punk wasn't a fashion uprising...it was a growing political movement. I started noticing the wrongs we were dealt. The Clash's first album turned my little white world upside down-the lyrics and angst changed me.

MRR: Considering the predominantly negative media coverage of punk at the time, what did your parents make of their son hooking up with what appeared to be the greatest social evil of the day? Did you come from a musical household?

Gagz: My mum, I think, would cringe at my clothes/hairstyles sometimes, but I think she'd be more embarrassed when aunties/uncles would come around, always pointing out to them, "Well, he might wear them clothes and look like that, but he bathes everyday." As for the dirty/filthy coating punks were given by the media, they knew when my friends came around that that was not true. My mum used to get up in clubs and sing and had a good voice. I don't think that was passed on to me though.

MRR: No Choice may be a new name to many readers, but the band actually formed back in 1980-81, yeah? Just give us a bit of early history of the band: how and why you all got together, and did you have any collective objectives back then?

Gagz: Most of this you can find in the "Try And You Might..." booklet. The objectives, though, were just to write

good songs incorporating exactly how we felt. One funny aim was when/if we got on Top Of The Pops with "Sadist Dream," because only Martin, Cid, and Sven had anything to do-me and Terry were going to be the first to make a cup of tea on stage and drink it... admirable aims indeed.

MRR: The original line-up had two singers, yeah? Why was that? Did you find the band became a tighter unit when the vocal duties were reduced to just yourself? How much more pressure do you feel that put on you as an individual?

Gagz: It was, we felt, more confronta tional with two people sharing vocals back and forth, back and forth, etc., and it worked. When that line-up changed. Martin would add all the backing vocals, so I never felt any pressure at all.

MRR: You had ties with a couple of record labels back then also, initially Riot City Records who released the *Sadist Dreams* 7" and comp appearances on various Rot Records samplers. How did the band get involved with those labels?

Gagz: Chaos from Chaos UK was friendly with Spike and gave our four-track demo to Riot City-this was the original line up. Rot Records just wrote to us for tracks for their *Have A Rotten Christmas* albums and that was the second line up; Ada-bass, Jake-drums, Martin-guitar/vocals and me-vocals.

MRR: Somewhere along the way, No Choice mutated into something called S.A.N.D, which featured a couple of members of Icons of Filth. Tell us a bit about that band. Why feel the need to change the name of the band? Did S.A.N.D have any differing ideals or beliefs from No Choice? Why did this band split up?

Gagz: S.A.N.D was the intrepid trio's (Gagz, Ada, Spike) stepping-stone back into playing again. We didn't want to use the name No Choice, even though the politics were the same. The music was a little less abrasive and playing live, we didn't want to have to appease people playing a lot of old stuff, so it seemed a good idea to start back under this name: Shallow Acts - No Depth, a stab at the apathetic. Tim played bass in S.A.N.D and had played bass in Icons Of Filth. The end of S.A.N.D came about simply because it had run its course and wasn't

as much of a buzz to us at the end. We'd funded our own 7" single at the time and couldn't get many gigs to sell them at so we just got a bit bored with the practice room I suppose.

MRR: If I'm correct, that brings us up to the band as it is today. When did you all get back together? Did you have any new ideals, hopes or aspirations for the band once it reformed this time round that were absent with the previous line-ups?

Gagz: No Choice got back through Spike's prompting. He felt we could make something really good if we just wanted to. He also instigated going back as No Choice. He said whenever we'd played live with S.A.N.D, the posters always stated... "ex No Choice." Plus, I didn't want No Choice to be remembered for just "Cream Of The Crop." People always referred to it as a working class anthem and I've never really been comfortable with that, as I think there are good and bad people from all walks of life, though I believe in equality and that those at the bottom are less inclined to live by the rules as, quite simply, it doesn't pay. So I wanted this period of No Choice to be a bit less naive politically. We tried a few bass players, but when Paul came in, that's when everything started to click, as he's an amazing bass player with really good ideas. There is no agenda other than to try and write good stuff and enjoy the practice room. Now, after having *Dry River Fishing* out and *Try And You Might*, we want to make a better third album.

MRR: You've just released *Dry River Fishing*. Are you happy with how it came out? The packaging looks incredible-what influences did you draw from for its construction?

Gagz: Yeah I'm really proud of *Dry River Fishing*, it sounds good and the packaging came out exactly as I wanted thanks to Monk Dave. I spent hours getting the pictures together, and Dave spent hours putting his style into it, and with the web addresses the feel we wanted came through. I wasn't influenced by any other album designs, just agreed with Dave on most things concerning detail.

MRR: It's released on the independant label Newest Industry. It was the label's first release even. How did you hook up with those guys? Did you not consider trying to get it released on a larger, or more established label?

Gagz: I took a five-track CDR to *Fracture* zine for review. Dave said he was thinking of starting a label up and after hearing it, wanted us to be the first release-naturally we said yes. I had sent copies to a few labels-no majors-just ones Welly of Four Letter Word/*Artcore* recommended, but had gotten no reply. Newest Industry has been really good for us and living around the corner from me was ideal, as things get sorted quickly.

MRR: Lyrically, you are a very politically motivated band. Do you feel that is something integral to punk rock? Would you ever feel comfortable doing the two-minute pop punk love song?

Gagz: I just write about life and how I see it. I think it is an integral part of No Choice to put these views across. I'm fully aware bands skirt around political issues. Those who do it for record sales, I have no time for; those that do it for an easy life, I have no time for. There are lots of bands mimicking punk and adding nothing. To me, punk is about getting politicized on every level, as everything in life is affected by politics. Sure, there's room for love songs; "Natural Sulphate" on *Try And You Might...* was written about my ex-wife and son, but to purposely steer clear of politics for gain is awful.

MRR: There are a couple of tracks on the album I would like to ask you about, starting with the opening track, "If Logic's First (We're Coming Second)." It features a sampled George Bush Jr. spoken introduction stating that, "Nobody likes war in America; We're a peaceful nation" and is followed later by Tony Blair stating that the UK is not the 51st state. Can you explain further the use of those samples in the song? And the lyric, "And this your cause of which you speak in pious tongue has one conclusion,"-what is the cause and the conclusion you refer to?

Gagz: PM, our bassist, had taped the news one night before we recorded the album and the irony of their statements on the same night was eerie. It was before they started the war on Iraq and as we know, the first rule of war is propaganda. That machine has to be in place and functioning-their aim being to nullify dissenters, to confuse and to eradicate. "If Logic's First" has a first line of: "Is no one watching, is no one listening, what does it take to stimulate us?" Obviously it questions the fact/fiction the general public are prepared to swallow. To us it was obvious the machine in place was put there by Bush's government. Blair, for reasons I still can't fully understand, used Britain as a lever to further Bush's aims. Both their statements were riddled with hypocrisy. For now, while America needs it, we are the 51st state. Bush's cause is ultimate power, hidden behind the "eradicate global terrorism" banner. His conclusion is to achieve this, through a smokescreen of lies, half truths, and military aggression.

MRR: What about the track, "Scale Climbers Revenge?" It seems to have a suggestion of, it's not what you know, but who you know, both in a positive and a negative sense. That correct? The line, "It's not the punches to the jaw, that end up softening the champion, it's the pats on his back" seems to refer to complacency being man's ultimate downfall. Can you expand a bit on that also?

Gagz: I hate the way Britain often mimics some American ideology. On "Scale Climbers Revenge," it was the yuppie mentality that came to mind and its watering down into fragments of most working life. It also berates this Labour government for doing nothing to stop it when it was the working class who would gain the least from it. Now though, we are tired of their rhetoric-compassionate fatigue has found its way. As for the "It's not the punches..." line, it's out of a boxing book, and yes, it is about complacency, and is a dig at Tony Blair, prior to his support of Bush. Over here he was seen as a political icon in some quarters. I obviously didn't see it that way then and still don't.

MRR: You also have a compilation released featuring those early releases, plus various demos, titled *Try And You Might...*, which is released on the California label Grand Theft Audio. How did you get involved with them?

Gagz: Brian from GTA got my address from Welly (Four Letter Word). I sent him some old stuff, and that was that-he liked it and brought it out. Personally, I think it's a good documentation of our previous stuff and I'm really grateful to him and to Welly for the link and his artwork.

MRR: The lyrics to "Cream Of The Crop," from the GTA comp, state "I don't support the Tory Party, and I lost faith in the Labour Party. And I don't like the Liberals or the SDP." I've also read you are not an anarchist for various reasons. Having mentioned the political direction of your lyrics above, where do you stand personally on the political map?

Gagz: If Socialism means equality for all, then I'd have to say I'm a Socialist, as I see that as an aim. I didn't write "Cream Of The Crop"-Martin, the original guitarist, did, though I did sing it and was glad to. It's a good song and I agreed with the sentiments then, although now I don't think the most important thing is where you come from, but more what person you become.

MRR: Taking into consideration the recent heat-wave here in the UK and the freak floods in Europe last year, what are your opinions on global warming? It's well known that America is the world leader in the production of greenhouse gases, being responsible for a quarter of all emissions, simultaneously refusing to curb production. Should Blair be making more noise in trying to persuade Bush that action has to be taken, or is he too much of a Bush lapdog? The title track of the album suggests it is something you have thought about.

Gagz: You're correct to say "Dry River Fishing" is about global warming and its effects on life and future life here. World capitalism is the root of all this, with greed being put before lives. We all know America's part in this, but there are others, too, and Blair's government has shown its true colors. As Crass said years ago, "Which ever way you vote the government wins." Blair is like a lapdog to Bush-we voted him in to confront these issues and tackle them, but he

refuses to go against the capitalist grain. I have a hope that people will rise and repel-you have to always at least have hope.

MRR: Some of your earlier tracks dealt with the threat of Global Nuclear War-a threat that was high on the consciousness of all back then. Do you feel the threat of terrorism, dirty bombs, suicide bombers, germ and chemical warfare, etc., is the major new peril in the public's eye?

Gagz: I think the threat of all these is prevalent as long as global capitalism has a stranglehold on struggling, developing countries. The lever is there for fundamentalists to use, and use it they do. As for a major new peril, I personally think that after Sept. 11 and Bali, people are thinking about terrorism more but not really the causes that have led to these acts.

MRR: Where do you stand on the idea of a Welsh government that is totally separate from the rest of the UK? Do you think Plaid Cymru is a viable political force that speaks for the Welsh people collectively?

Gagz: I've always felt a central government based in London running Wales was awful. Then they gave us "devolution," what a fucking joke that is. We now have Welsh Quangos making decisions that are offering our people no more than lip service-the cost of living rises and the standard of living falls, whilst those put in charge by Labour's London government are no more than yes-men and careerists. Being more of an internationalist, separatism doesn't appeal to me. We just need a socialist-based government. Plaid Cymru are pathetic-they lack vision and border on a being a racist farming party.

MRR: I understand you have a full-time job, plus two children. How hard do you find it to balance that life with the time needed to make No Choice a musical success?

Gagz: I'm self-employed and struggle to make ends meet at times. Sadly, I'm now divorced, and spend most of my time outside work with my kids. Nicky, my son, comes to most of our gigs and is really into his music-he's also good friends with Against Me. Jess, my daughter, loves music too-The Clash are her favorites. To me, the band is a favorite hobby but comes way behind my kids, so there's no struggle at all. As for musical success, I don't wait for it or seek it.

MRR: Does the No Choice set of today feature any of the band's old songs? Do you do any covers, or plan to?

Gagz: Live, we stick to songs from *Dry River Fishing*, plus two new songs that are going on a split 7". Occasionally, we'll play "Another Page," which was written with the second No Choice line-up-that really being Ada's debut on guitar-and not too shabby a debut, too, if I may say so. As for covers, we don't now do any. About a year ago we'd sometimes play "Little Bit More" by Zounds or "Ghosts" by The Jam, but not now.

MRR: You used to play a lot of Miners' benefits and Anti-Apartheid shows-do you play, or would you play, any benefits today? Which ones would you consider? What's the story I heard about a certain disillusionment with Charlie Harper of the UK Subs and his comments about you playing for the striking Miners back in the 80s?

Gagz: Yeah, we've done benefit gigs and still do-the latest being a rape crisis benefit in Leeds. We are happy to do these and honored to be asked. I'm proud to have done the benefit gigs we have, and within the punk "scene" in the UK, the benefits we are asked to do are always for worthwhile causes. The one time I nearly lost it with Charlie Harper of the UK Subs was in 1984 in Leeds. We had been doing a few Miners benefit gigs in the weeks previous, so I had with me leaflets explaining how money raised was helping these mining communities. Bear in mind, on this night we were supporting the UK Subs, I took these leaflets across to the table where Charlie and his band were sitting and asked them if they'd care to read them, also telling him basically what was within and that this support of the mining communities was a fight against the worst government I had known. He just shrugged his shoulders and said, "Nah mate, not interested. They're all sheep." I, stunned, replied, "You fucking what?" right in his face. One of his mates pulled him away and saved him from being punched. I just could not believe this idiot knew and chose to know nothing of a working class struggle that was happening right then-not very punk rock, methinks.

MRR: So, I understand you have a split release coming out soon. Can you tell us about that? You are also planning a tour of the USA, I believe? How are those plans coming along? When is that going to happen, and what are your expectations?

Gagz: The split 7" will be with Canadian band Fifth Hour Hero and will be on Newest Industry and No Idea, featuring two tracks each-one of ours will be "Pollute And Polarise," which concentrates on the growing number of right-wing BNP party candidates winning seats in run-down areas of the UK, using bullshit and scare-mongering rhetoric-the asylum seekers are targeted as benefit fraudsters, gypsies, and job-takers, and the actual facts are distorted, creating racial tension in these areas. The other will be "11th Hour," about Blair's and Bush's ideals and what's behind them. This should be out by November. The tour of the USA is in February with Against Me, who we've become really good friends with after they toured the UK during March this year. They really are a great band and believe in the same things we do. Hopefully next year we'll be releasing a split 7" with them, but that's way off at the moment, although both bands are keen on it happening. I really don't know what to expect when we tour the USA-hopefully meeting like-minded, good people, seeing different sights, and hanging out with Against Me. Adam and Jordan will make it awesome.

MRR: After that, what are your plans?

Gagz: Next year we'll release either an album or mini-album on Newest Industry, plus it's now quite possible No Idea will be releasing *Dry River Fishing* late this year or early next year. Apart from that, me and Spike reckon we're going to get fit....haha, Ada's put punctuation at the top of his list, Kaney's going to take on serious nappy-changing duties, and PM has promised to no longer be caught looking at the top shelf at petrol stops...ha.

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FM

THE FM KNIVES DON'T CARE. THEY DON'T CARE IF YOU EVER HEAR THEIR MUSIC OR GET TO SEE THEM PLAY A SHOW. THEY DON'T CARE IF THEY GET TO PLAY WITH SOME IMPORTANT BAND. THEY DON'T CARE IF ANYONE LIKES THEIR MUSIC AT ALL. BUT A MOST UNEXPECTED THING HAPPENED TO THE BAND THAT DIDN'T GIVE A SHIT. PEOPLE DID HEAR THEM AND THEY LOVED THEM. THE FIRST TIME I HEARD THEIR DEBUT ALBUM, "USELESS AND MODERN" (BROKEN REKKIDS), IT REMINDED ME SO MUCH OF WHY I HAD GROWN TO HATE MOST PUNK ROCK—AND IT WAS BECAUSE IT DIDN'T SOUND LIKE FM KNIVES. SINCE THE RELEASE OF "USELESS AND MODERN," FM KNIVES HAVE RECEIVED A WATERSHED OF CRITICAL PRAISE FOR THEIR CATCHY, POST-OI, PUNK ROCK TUNES. FM KNIVES ARE PART OF A SMALL GROUP OF PUNK BANDS THAT ACTUALLY MATTER RIGHT NOW IN THESE TIMES OF THE PAST CATCHING UP WITH THE PRESENT. FM KNIVES ARE A SELF-PROFESSED BAR BAND THAT'S MANAGED TO MAKE IT OUT OF THE LOCAL PUB SCENE TO PLAY MANY WEST COAST CITIES, AND HAS RECENTLY GONE COAST TO COAST THIS PAST SPRING. HAILING FROM THE MOST UN-CALIFORNIA OF ALL OF CALIFORNIA'S MAJOR CITIES, SACRAMENTO, THE BAND HAS BROKEN THROUGH ITS "LANDLOCKED" LOCATION BUT STILL DOESN'T REALLY CARE WHERE EVERYTHING GOES FROM HERE.

I HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF GETTING DRUNK WITH THE FM KNIVES BEFORE THEIR SHOW AT THE BEACHLAND TAVERN IN CLEVELAND AND THEN GETTING TO SEE WHAT WOULD TURN OUT TO BE A RARE MIDWESTERN PERFORMANCE. AFTER THE SHOW THEY LET ME GRILL THEM ON THE SINGULAR FOCUS OF MUCH OF THE BAND'S MEDIA, THE STATE OF PUNK ROCK, AND ART IN MUSIC.

INTERVIEW
BY DAN RIZER

⏭MRR: So how did FM Knives get started?

Ed: At a karaoke bar.

Jason: There was this Korean karaoke bar called the XO, and the bar got tired of doing it (karaoke). So they had this big backlog of songs, so me and Ed would just sit up at the bar drinking and singing all these songs, like:

(both singing) Congratulations... (laughter)

Ed: So there I was sitting at the bar and Jason came up and asked if I wanted to join a band with Chris and Zack and I just said sure.

Chris: There was a preliminary discussion about it at an In and Out drive through near the karaoke bar.

Ed: Yeah, it was karaoke night. It's funny how we all remember that exact same moment. It was the collective moment; it's a weird thing. So they asked me and I was their friend so I said yeah, fuck yeah.

Chris: I was in a band with Jason before called the Pretty Girls, I was the drummer in that band. I finished the album with tennis elbow and quit the band and was kind of bored and wanted to start another side band... Sacramento side band number 853... we're all part of a family tree here. (laughter)

Jason: It's only funny if you're local, otherwise it's a boring joke.

⏭MRR: You guys have been in quite a few bands prior to FM Knives—what bands were those?

Ed: Uhm... Nar, Pretty Girls, and that's about it.

Jason: Chris was in Karate Party. A bunch of other crappy bands.

Ed: Yeah a bunch of crap bands, none of them are worth mentioning, none ever made it out here.

⏭MRR: So how do you guys go about writing your songs?

Chris: It's sort of democratic. Sometimes I've got a guitar thing, sometimes Zack's got a bass thing. Jason always writes the words, and that's pretty much how it goes.

⏭MRR: What is the music scene like in Sacramento for a band like yourselves?

Jason: There's this horrible band there called the Bananas, avoid at all costs.

Ed: They'll rip you off.

Jason: And they're white power. (laughter)

Chris: Oh, no. (still laughing)

Jason: They're yellow... actually they're yellow power, not white power. We're Operation Ivy. (laughter)

Ed: I don't know, there's not really a scene. It's all just so local. You end up just playing with all your friends' bands and everyone just knows each other.

Jason: There's us, and the Bananas, and the Four Eyes and some other bands. We're all friends and we just sit around and drink and start bands.

Ed: We really don't play in Sacramento all that often. We play San Francisco a lot more actually.

⏭MRR: So what are ethics involved with FM Knives? Do you guys have any interest in politics and modern issues at all or is more about fun?

Ed: We practice a lot and we're real serious about practicing. Which is rare for any bands we've been in. Usually band practices for those bands would be meet at the designated time but add a half an hour. Drink for two hours, play for 20 minutes, and then drink some more.

Chris: Our ethics are basically drinking,

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but we do get a lot done too.
Ed: We're productive and we're a drinking band.
⏭**MRR:** So you consider yourselves a drinking band then?
Ed: Of course.
Jason: We're so conceited that our personal problems are our politics and we think everyone should treat them as politics.
Ed: But seriously, we work hard at this band... comparatively.
⏭**MRR:** It seems right now that punk music is getting to be at an all-time commercial high. Could you ever see FM Knives getting any sort of crossover mainstream exposure?
Chris: We're really happy it's that high.
Jason: We really like the Jimmy Eats World and those bands.
Ed: I like Blink and Sugar Ray.
Jason: That's who we listen to pretty much, those are our biggest influences. (laughter)
Ed: ....No, I don't know about that. It's good I guess—those bands just do their thing.
⏭**MRR:** Is this just something that you totally disassociate yourselves with?
Ed: Well, yeah...
⏭**MRR:** You could never see yourselves playing the Warped Tour or anything like that.
Ed: If somebody offered us enough money to do it...
Jason: We wouldn't play the Warped Tour. That would involve us having to play outside in daylight. (laughter)
Ed: We know bands that play the Warped Tour.
Chris: I personally am glad that I'm old and ugly enough to never have to worry about it.
⏭**MRR:** What's your take on bands that go that route?
Ed: More power to them if they can get paid, you know. We would never start a band with that intention.
Jason: I think the mark of a good band is commercial success. (laughter)
Ed: This whole interview is sarcasm. (laughter)
Jason: No seriously, those are the best bands. I'm just so sick of bands trying to say something. Just shut up and play good songs like Good Charlotte.
Ed: We know bands that are now of a multi-million dollar status and bands like us and all those big bands started just like us.
Jason: The way we look at it is that the only bands worth listening to are bands that use ProTools. (laughter)
⏭**MRR:** Nearly all of the press that I've read about FM Knives says that you guys recall the early days of the UK punk movement and the Buzzcocks.
Chris: I guess a lot of it has to do with the

PHOTO: LISA CONNOLLY

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born tenor of Jason's voice, but songwriting wise we draw from everyone but them (the Buzzcocks).

Jason: It all has to do with the fact that the only band we listen to is the Buzzcocks. (laughter) And we're actually from Manchester. It took us forever to finally sound like them.

⏭**MRR:** What do you think about all these bands like Wire, the Buzzcocks, and Stiff Little Fingers reforming and writing new material and touring?

Jason: Well, when Wire started they were already a reform band. They were already older than us.

Ed: Stiff Little Fingers... I love them and I really don't want to hear the new stuff.

Jason: I want to see how Foxton's mullet is going. (laughter)

Ed: It nice that they do it but I really don't want to hear it. It's just not legitimate anymore.

Jason: It just so sad really. I really wanted to see Sham 69 and Menace but they do these tours where they only play for like 15 minutes and they play 3 songs.

Ed: I love all that old music, that's how I learned how to play drums was from listening to those bands. That may have something to do with how we sound, but our songwriting doesn't come from that stuff at all.

⏭**MRR:** Do you ever think punk music could ever be as vital as it was back then?

Chris: Those bands didn't know it was that important at the time.

Ed: It's really all what you make it.

Jason: All those bands just wanted to be the Kinks. They were just bored, they didn't have anything better to do. I don't think they were on any sort of mission... there wasn't a thesis with any of those bands... well maybe with Wire there was.

Ed: They played it and the people just came. Do you think the Heartbreakers had some political agenda? Who by the way is our other favorite band.

Chris: Especially "Mud Crutch" era Heartbreakers.

⏭**MRR:** Are there any current bands that you guys feel a kinship towards?

Ed: Sugar Ray.

Jason: Not really, no. I mean there are lots of little bands

Ed: Now all these bands are getting paid immediately. Things just go into production and it's totally out of their hands.

⏭**MRR:** Well you guys just toured with A-Frames...

Ed: Well yeah, but I mean there's no big bands or anything...

⏭**MRR:** I don't care about big bands, just good bands.

Chris: Really just the bands in Sacramento, our friends' bands are who we relate to.

Ed: We all have a different idea of the bands that we'd like to play with. On this tour I haven't really enjoyed any of the bands we've played with at all. But these guys like different bands than I do.

Jason: Yeah, I enjoyed seeing the Spits play, the Tyrades. I enjoy going on tour to see all these different bands play. Then we get to drink with the bands and do shots with them.

Ed: I like that part better than watching them.

Jason: I don't want to listen to all these bands after a tour. That's not saying anything bad about their music or that our music is better or whatever. It's just cool that there are all these bands that are fun to party with and hang out with and we remember each other's first names and stuff.

Ed: We're from pretty far away, we're isolated from all of this. Out here you can hit up 10 major cities in 10 days and we have to drive 10 days just to get to Fargo. It's different. We're not surrounded by Chicago and Detroit and Cincinnati.

Chris: We've never done the circuit before. This is our first time doing the East Coast touring thing.

Ed: We drive an hour and a half once a month to play San Francisco and that's pretty much all we do. Otherwise we drive 800 miles to fucking Portland or 600 miles to LA.

⏭**MRR:** So how did Useless and Modern come about?

Chris: Uhm... we decided to start a rock 'n' roll band. We practiced for one year. We wrote 15 songs and then paired it down to 13. We recorded the album at our little practice space and that was that.

Ed: We put it out and I just thought well that's done and then we started hearing that people actually liked it. I was just thinking, are you serious?

Jason: We've thought it was pretty entertaining. We didn't think anyone would like it.

Ed: If we knew what it was going to be when we did it then it would have never been the album that it is.

Chris: We didn't think we'd be playing any Chicago shows because of that record.

Jason: We recorded in a place where we've been spinning our wheels in bands forever. It was the same spot that we'd always played in and I didn't think we'd ever do it again honestly.

⏭**MRR:** How does it feel to be a band of music fans having fans yourselves now?

Ed: It's pretty cool... it's really cool. It's just really cool to come to a place like Cleveland and meet 10 people who like our band.

Chris: We're still at that point where the only people who've heard us are those that chase down weird records, so we can personally relate to the people who find us.

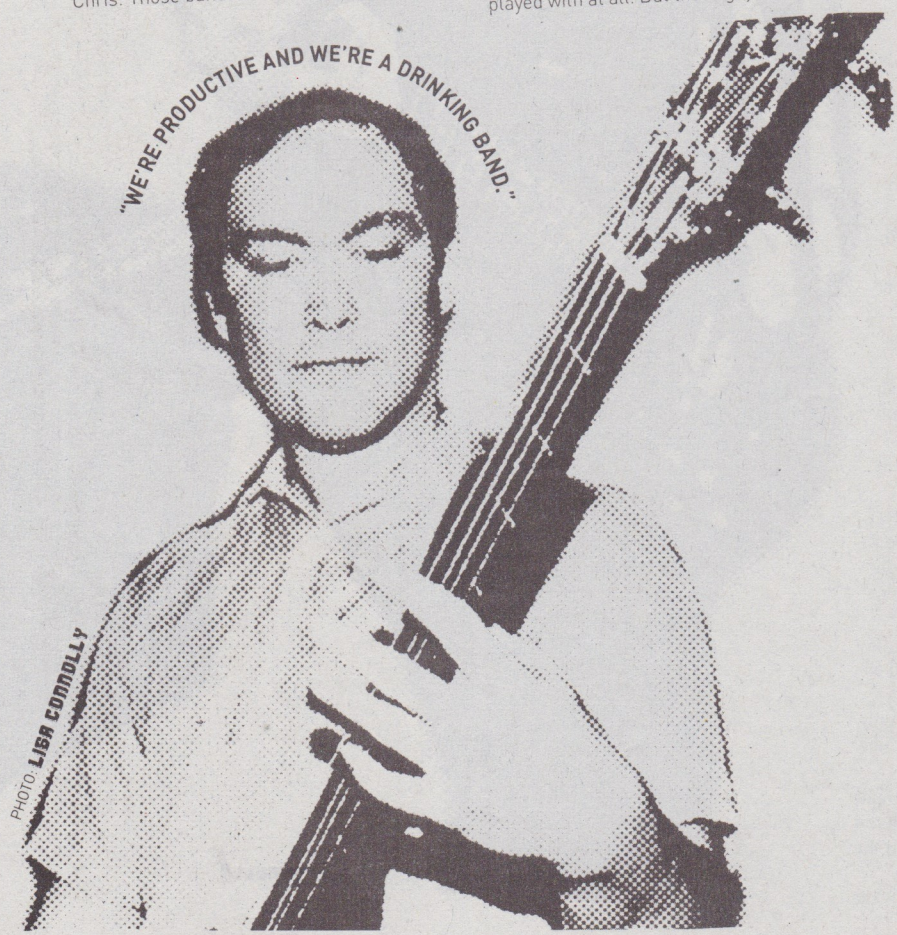
Ed: It's really something cool. It's what we do to bands that we like who come to Sacramento.

Jason: But you know what we wouldn't do? We wouldn't try to trade records with a touring band.

Chris: No.

Jason: I'm so fucking sick of that. How presumptuous is it to assume that a band that came 80,000 miles is going to want your record?

Chris: Give them $5 for baking a cake.



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Jason: Considering the fact that we played Boston for $80. The girl who did it acted like she was really doing us this huge favor.
Ed: That's 3,100 miles from Sacramento and there are 90 people there who paid $6 a head. Thanks for the $80. (laughter) Not that it's about the money or anything, but the club's appreciation of bands has really dropped and they think they're really doing you a favor by giving you anything at all.
Chris: It's like that AC/DC song "It's a Long Way to the Top..."
⏭**MRR:** Do you have any ambitions to get to that point?
Jason: No, we don't have any ambitions.
Chris: We all have good jobs. We have lives. I have a cat.
Ed: We would not be doing this if we had ambitions.
Jason: The most depressing thing in the world is a 30-year-old with ambitions. (laughter)
Ed: This thing has always been brutal. We always fight and we argue and there's always drama, but we do it 'cause we love to. It's all gravy really. Every time someone buys a record it's just luck. We really didn't put any effort into the album. It's the people that are listening to it that make it what it is. It probably means more to a lot of them than it does to me. It's out of our hands now. When we're up on stage... we've played the same songs 12 nights in a row now. It's not about us, it's about the people that paid money to see us.
⏭**MRR:** What are your thoughts about a lot of these bands that are sort of self-important, and it is about the band or the music? Like a lot of the more avant-garde....
Ed: Fuck that shit. I hate it. I hate arty bands, I hate all these self-important bands.
Jason: We do hate art. Seriously, I'm not trying to be witty or sarcastic here, we really do hate art.
Ed: I'm sick of all these bands that wear skinny ties. We like songwriting. We like melodies, we like songs. We don't like (starts banging on the table).
⏭**MRR:** Not to start a debate here, but as someone who likes those types of bands...
Chris: OK, just for the record, I am the guy who likes art bands. I like the artier stuff.
Ed: I like Stiff Little Fingers, he likes Gang Of Four.
Chris: I like the Boredoms.
Jason: The thing that gets to me is all these arty bands that think they're as good as the Fall. They just go about it like they're just so fucking charming and angry and they're not, they're following a template.
Chris: We've seen a lot of art on tour that just wasn't pulling it off.
Ed: Too many bands with synthesizers and movies projected behind them.
Chris: Too many bands dressed as birthday cakes, just not pulling it off.
Jason: It's not like (self mocking) "Oh they don't sound like the Buzzcocks, we hate them" Most of these bands just aren't doing anything new and there's just nothing to it.
Chris: There is good challenging arty stuff out there right now...
Jason: Yeah there is, we just haven't gotten booked with it this tour.
Ed: If you don't have a bass in a band, fuck off. If you have two drummers take a fucking hike. Everybody else in the band loves the Dirtbombs, I think they suck shit. The Grateful Dead had two drummers and we'll leave it at that.
Jason: Basically Arthur Alexander had a bass player, so everyone should have one. God forbid I should say that Arthur Alexander is better than fucking Comets On Fire.
Chris: Oh, naming names.
Jason: Yeah, now Comets On Fire are going to come get us. You probably shouldn't get us going on this.
⏭**MRR:** So what's coming up for you guys, any releases, tours...?
Ed: An album.
Chris: We're halfway through writing a new album and after that we start flying to all our shows. The next time we come out here we'll play Milwaukee, Chicago and Detroit and then just fly home. (laughter) Then we'll fly to Boston and New York for two days and fly home.
Ed: We can't take anymore of this van shit.
Jason: I've actually learned a lot about myself on this tour... no I haven't.
Ed: It's really the only way we can do it. We all have responsibilities back home, we have jobs. We're not 20-year-olds anymore.
Jason: Yeah, it really sucks that this all happened in our 30s. We all met when we were in our 20s but this couldn't have happened then. We wouldn't have been writing what we're writing now.
⏭**MRR:** Since you guys claim to have no aspirations at all is there anything you guys hope to accomplish?
Jason: A deli tray.
Ed: A rider?
Jason: I think it would be really great to get towels after a show. (laughter)
Chris: My aspiration would be that our second record be as good as the first.
Ed: Yeah, I mean that's really what this is all about.
Chris: The problem with our first record is that we've heard some good press about it and that was when we made the album as a joke and we were just spinning our wheels as band. Now we have to go and write a new album and it's a totally different perspective. We had this hopelessness when we did the first record and it really was just an accident. But since we've been getting totally ripped every night of the tour there's a good chance the second record will be good.
Jason: All the bands in Sacramento go about this the same way. You put out a record with some good songs on it and maybe a couple hundred people will like it. You barely ever play out and you never think about these big tours or a Warped Tour or whatever.
Chris: It's more fun to play 10 times a year than 200.
Jason: I think TV Personalities is sort of the blueprint for all the decent Sacramento bands.
Ed: Nobody ever thinks about playing outside of San Francisco, we're just so landlocked. It's really all about practice, playing with your friends. We just go to practice and forget about everything.

PHOTO: LISA CONNOLLY

BURY THE LIVING

Bury The Living is an awesome hardcore band with some of the most honest lyrics you're likely to hear today. Their first EP is an absolute killer. Blistering hardcore with a dark and unsettling edge. Everything they have released since (a split with Drawblank, a second EP on Kangaroo, and a track on a recent Kangaroo comp called Loved By Few...) is on the same level. Sometime soon they will release a full-length LP on Soul Cheap as well as a discography CD (sans the LP) on Kangaroo. This interview was conducted over the phone with vocalist Pat, who prior to Bury The Living was in FMD, and a joke straight-edge band called Beards Not Beers. The rest of the band is Luke Hall, Marc Morgan, and Cey Mooney. When Pat is not sweating all over the stage screaming about this and that, or organizing on the factory floor, he spends time in the squared circle under the moniker Choke, a mentally challenged Southern heavyweight wrestling champion. Recently he was in a deathmatch, and has wrestled (at this writing) thrice on thumbtacks, light bulbs, and has had his ass whooped with a flaming baseball bat wrapped in barbed wire. And he's a redneck.

Interview by Matt Average. Answering is Pat.

MRR: It seems like you have had an considerable amount of trouble with line-up changes and hassles with labels.

Pat: It may just be our bad luck, but in general the whole punk rock scene has gone to shit. You go to shows in most places and you're lucky if thirty kids show up. We booked a west coast tour and we had to cancel that. We booked an east coast tour, and about a month before we were going to do that I called to verify everything and half the people were either, "Oh no, I forgot," or "No, it's just not going to work out," or "Well we were going to have it at my mom's house and she doesn't want to do it." Just a bunch of kids who want free records, basically. We were trying to do as much stuff as we could with smaller labels. Trying to help out smaller labels. I'm not saying we were going to sell a million records or anything like that. Still, I would rather help out some kid who is trying to get a label started, if possible. That was our first mistake. I think our first record came out OK. The guy who did it repressed it three times and we never saw a single copy of the represses. The second one finally came out but it took about a year and a half. The guy that was supposed to do our CD, and I spent about a hundred dollars in the studio, just up and decided, "Oh well, I just don't want to do it," after begging me for a year to let him put out a CD. It seems like every time we tried to do something, like record a ten-inch, it becomes a seven-inch. Every time we try to do something, something goes wrong. Don't get me wrong. There have been some really good things happen to us too. Henk from Kangaroo Records has been really cool. Things like that. Just overall, being in this band in this particular time in punk rock history really leaves a shitty taste in my mouth.

MRR: Where do you think the punk scene went wrong?

Pat: Shit, that's a pretty broad question. Do you want to take it a section at a time?

MRR: Yeah, let's do that.

Pat: I think punk rock is fucking dead, as a subculture, because, I think, the political correctness of it all. Punk rock has traditionally been extremely anti-Christianity, but in my opinion, punk rock has become more like Christianity than Christianity. You worship the god on stage. You don't read the Bible, but you read His Hero Is Gone lyrics. Whatever comes out of their mouths (not that they—HHIG—are bad, it's just whatever band is popular at the time) whatever comes out of their mouth is gospel. If you don't agree with the scene-heads, fuck you, you're ostracized. One of my favorite examples is the Oath record, when it came out. I thought it was fucking brilliant. I loved the idea. I knew as soon as that record came out it was going to shake shit up and it did. But it just proved my point. Labels refusing to distribute it, because "What would the parents think?" Where would the punk scene be right now if in the late 70s and all through the 80s the bands and the labels were worried about what the parents were going to do? Give me a fucking break! It used to be about pissing people off, and being fucking extremely in your face and out there. Now it's like the Future Democrats of America. It makes me fucking sick. I was in a van with a band, and I won't say what band, but I remember saying the word "motherfucker." And the guy in the band completely flipped out, "Dude, you can't say 'motherfucker' because blah blah..." and just ranted about how it was insensitive to women all this other shit. I was just like, what the fuck? That's where punk rock went wrong; worrying about what everyone else does. I remember going to shows in Memphis in the early 90s. In one parking lot you would have hardliners and straight-edge kids, and drunk-ass punk rockers, and hippie punks, and preppy kids, and fucking hippies... Pick a type and they were all hanging out. There was the occasional fight. But what I remember about that and loved the most is that I learned so fucking much. Because it was such a diverse thing. Now you go to a punk rock show and one hundred kids show up—it's the same hundred kids. They all have on the same black T-shirt, the same black pants, the bullet belt, black boots, the greasy hair—standing around moping. They like the same music, they believe the same things. And even if they don't believe the same things, they're not going to admit that they don't believe the same things because, you know, XYZ might not think you're punk rock for it. No one is allowed to have their own opinion anymore. I love Mike Thorn, don't get me wrong here *[editor's note: Mike Thorn equals MRR? Hello?]* but I blame *MRR* and *Heartattack* for a lot this. It's not really their fault, necessarily. It's the kids' faults because they look at whatever band, and they take everything that they say in this vacuum as gospel truth. When I say something on stage, and I tell people this, I don't want you to take what I say and be like, "Yeah that's it. That's true." I want to say things to stimulate thought, and maybe get people to go out and investigate it. If it's important enough to scream about, write songs about, wear a T-shirt about, hold a protest sign about, it's important enough for you to go out and find the facts. Don't take anything that I say, or anyone else said as the truth. That's not the point of this.

MRR: My frame of mind is that right now punk rock has become very fucking cheap. Why in the hell does it have to be this way? I'm starting to wonder what the point is of punk rock at all anymore. Like you said, the anger is out of it, and no one is really asking questions anymore, at least about anything relevant, and no one is really pushing the envelope anymore.

Pat: Nobody gives a fuck about what any of us are singing about. The people that are singing about anything important, no one gives a fuck about what they're singing about. Everything you say, you can just stand up there and go blah blah

blerr blerrr... and they're going to cheer. They don't give a fuck. Punk rock is in the malls now. Look at Hot Topic. I see these fucking kids walking out of Hot Topic with these $180 bondage pants, spiky hair... It's ridiculous. Punk rock has become a caricature. We're not doing a damn thing about it. Most of the punks I know now days walk around looking like rednecks. We wear our army pants, a plain gray T-shirt, a sweatshirt over it maybe. Beards. We look like regular people. We don't even look like "punks" anymore. The thing is, they (Hot Topic kids, etc) think punk rock is the way you look.

MRR: But if you really want to boil it down, on the fashion level, how many punks throughout its history did actually walk around with bondage pants? Most punks, I don't think, ever really did. The fashion thing is just a cartoon.

Pat: They just look at the Sex Pistols. Apparently they are the only punk band that existed, until Nirvana. As far as they know, there was the Sex Pistols, then three years went by and then there was Nirvana. Then there was the Offspring, Green Day, and Blink 182. What's really sad, Green Day, pop punk, or whatever you want to call it, was weak enough. Now Green Day is not even cool anymore. Blink 182 came along and they watered it down. Now you have Sum 41 coming along and watering it down even more. Now you have Avril Lavigne. Some fourteen-year-old girl dressed like Britney Spears with an "attitude." You know what happened with metal in the 80s? It went from *Chips* and *Quincy* with the scary punk rockers to now where punk rock is like what the Monkees were in the 60s. It's a fucking joke, and we're not doing a damn thing about it. We're just trying to keep it as underground as we can. Which in a way is OK. I've seen kids come to shows, and maybe they're wearing a Limp Bizkit shirt, or something like that. I've seen people make fun of them, and point at them, get in their face and ask them what the fuck are they doing here. Calling them rednecks and shit like that. When I went to my first punk rock show I was wearing a fucking Skid Row shirt! It may have been because I was bigger than everyone else, but no one made fun of me to my face. Actually here's a funny story; Lee, the bass player from Cop Out, actually walked up to me in the pit and started punching me in the stomach. Then he just turned around and walked away. I'm not saying anything bad. I just thought that was fucking funny. That was punk! I understand we need to keep punk rock underground, to a extent, but if these kids that are showing up to shows, and they're trying to learn something new, and they're trying to find something out, it seems like instead of ostracizing them and making them feel like outsiders, just be a good example and show them there's more to punk rock than signing songs about masturbating and your girlfriend breaking up with you. You don't have to go to Hot Topic and spend $500 on your mom's credit card to be punk.

MRR: I think what used to draw people into punk rock isn't really there anymore. Because now people might see it as easy to get into, so why bother? The truly alienated people aren't really going to go to it because it's so easy and the thing to do today. So they might go off into something else.

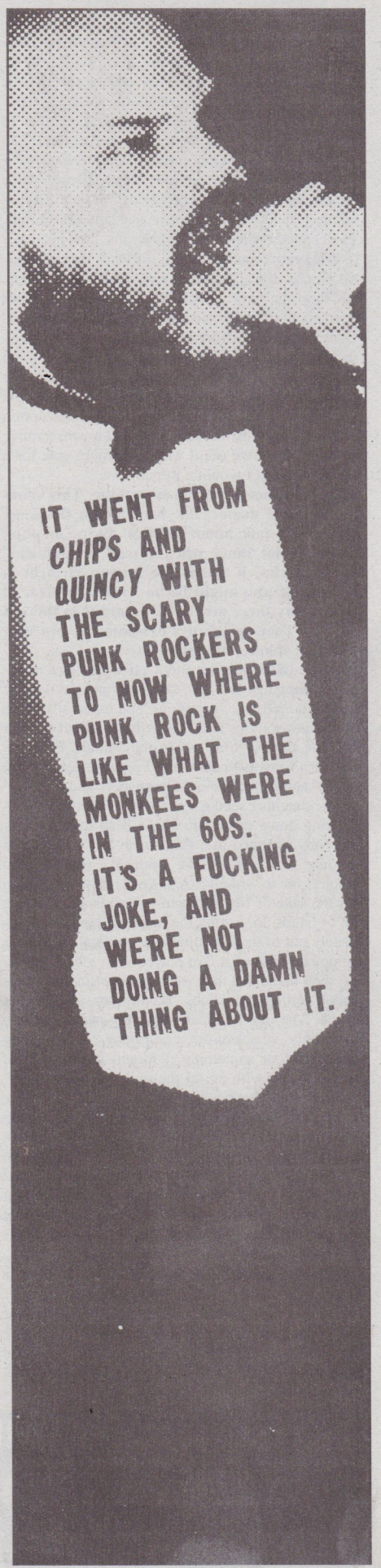
Pat: It shouldn't be like that. We played shows where people thought it wasn't very "punk rock" to play. But we did because we knew there would be a couple hundred people there that never have been around real punk or real hardcore. Some of those people there, it blew their mind when they saw us play. They were like, "When's the next show?" The way I look at it is if one or two people get into it because of what we say or play on stage, then it's worth it. We played with the pseudo Dead Kennedys. We talked shit about them the entire time we were on stage. We looked them dead in the face and called them a bunch of money-grubbing pieces of shit. We looked them dead in the eyes and were talking a bunch of shit. We had the whole crowd laughing at them. To me that's what it's all about. We'll play a rock show, we'll play a country & western show if we think there will be some people there that might not normally know what real punk rock is about.

MRR: You've mentioned that you are interested in politics. How far do you take your interest?

Pat: We just got done yesterday going to Fort Smith, Arkansas. We were at an anti-war protest there. We played a show that night. Cey Mooney is our drummer. He is also in a band called Pezz. Sometimes the band has to go on hiatus because he'll take three months off and go tour with Voices Of the Wilderness and do protests and speak all over the country. He's been on humanitarian missions to Iraq. So as far as that goes, in that arena, he kicks my ass as far as how much dedication he has. It amazes me what he does. I cannot say enough good things about the guy.

MRR: How effective do you think marching down the street holding a sign really is?

Pat: It doesn't necessarily raise awareness. Everyone is aware of what is going on in Iraq. Occasionally you might make someone think of something they didn't think of before like the oil coalition or something. Yesterday in Fort Smith I was thinking 99 percent of this town was going to be throwing bottles of piss at us. I would have to say for every person that flipped us off, five people drove by and had their thumbs raised. I think a lot of times it shows people out there that might have these beliefs, but look at the news and say eighty percent of America is pro-war. It shows them that maybe that's not so true. A lot of people (in Fort Smith) stopped, walked across the street, and held up signs—people that had no connection to us or other people at the protest. There was everyone there, from Catholic nuns to a couple of sorority girls who were out walking their dog. Punk rockers, business-type people. All kinds of people were there. It was great. I also think a lot more can be done. I think civil disobedience is very important. I really wish more people would do the Michael Moore-style guerilla journalism. I think handing out flyers helps. We're making flyers about Trent Lott to have him removed from office. We're putting in his office number and email, where to go to find the senator from your state... Sometimes that's all it takes. Some people think, Well what can I do about it? Well, you show them what you can do about it. I think that's the real power in protest. We're not going to be quiet about it. Way too many people are quiet about it, and that's why America is in the state it's in. Fuck punk rock. I used to be incredibly anti-voting. You know, Fuck it, I'm not going to be part of the system. Can you imagine if every punk and every socialist, and every extreme of the left wing, just on a local level, participated and voted in a candidate? Like next year, I plan to run for the school board. The educational system, especially in Memphis, and the state of Tennessee is horrible. It's very unfair, and I think it's racist, and a million other reasons. In the district I will be running in, if I could get the young people that don't vote—if I could just get them to vote this one time, I could win. Not that many people vote on a local level in Memphis. Two to three thousand people sometimes will vote for a certain office. Sure the punk rock community in America is not what it used to be. But just imagine if we all got together and participated. We could make a difference. We might not be able to get a socialist candidate elected president. But maybe we could get one elected for the city school board or to the community commission, or maybe even mayor. In Fort Smith, they were telling me that their mayor is a 70-year-old man who has run unopposed for twelve years.



MRR: Doesn't the Green Party go into it knowing they're going to lose, but at least their platform will get into discussion?

Pat: Yes, but it's hard to do, because the media limit the debates to the Republican and Democratic committee. All the media have their agendas and they're doing all they can to keep the Green Party out. The only time they do mention Ralph Nader's name is to say, "Well that's why we have George Bush!" Like fuckin' Al Gore will be any better. He's a fucking whore just like George Bush, just different pimps. The Democrats and the Republicans, they just cater to different corporations and different special interest groups. It's all about money, it's all about them, and they don't give a fuck about us! I hate it when I hear people cussin' George Bush and wishing Al Gore was in fuckin' office. Al Gore wouldn't be any fuckin' better. The thing that makes me sick is when people like Rush Limbaugh talk about the Democratic party being left wing and socialist. It is not left wing and socialist. America has this notion of what a socialist is based on what a conservative is telling them we are. I would no more vote for a Democrat than I would a Republican.

MRR: Business controls everything. This country is not a democracy. Kind of on the same topic, let's talk about political lyrics in punk bands. A lot times when I read a "political" band's lyrics, it seems the human element is missing. It also might be an American idea. In this society there are our lives and then there is politics. They are always presented as two very different spheres of reality.

Pat: I read a lot of lyrics and it's like reading a newspaper clipping. It's just statistics and no feeling behind it. When I write lyrics, and especially some of the newer lyrics that I've written—about the war and the things going on in the Middle East and America's involvement in it—I see some of this shit on TV and in the fuckin' newspapers and I fuckin' cry. I remember seeing a photo of a Palestinian man walking down the street with a dead three-month-old baby wrapped in a Palestinian flag and he was holding it over his head. Stuff like that is what inspires me to write lyrics. It's not just writing them for the sake of writing them, which is something a lot of bands do. I think the human element is completely out of it. Sometimes the political element is completely out of it. We played with a band, I forget their name, but they were up there singing songs about getting blow jobs. Having sex and getting drunk. The one political song they had was some incredibly whacked-out conspiracy theory being about 9/11 or something. I forget. It's bands like that, or bands with run-of-the-mill "smash the state" lyrics. I think that has hurt politics in punk a lot too, because it seems like they're saying it to be saying it. It doesn't seem like it affects them in their lives. When I read lyrics, I don't care if it's a Waylon Jennings song or a Negative Approach song, I want to be able to read those lyrics and be able to hear it in his voice that he means what he's saying and that the person who wrote them felt them. I think that's important and that it will make a lot of difference.

MRR : Do you want to talk about some of your other lyrics? Like "Thnx Management"?

Pat: I was working at a vet clinic. This particular guy, when he was having a bad day, he would take it out on the employees. If you asked a question and if he didn't think it was smart question he would let you know. He would tear into your ass and scream and yell, and spit in your face. He would threaten to fire you, and throw shit across the room. That song was inspired by a day like that. I think the lyric is "Hold my employment like a gun at my head." That's what a lot of bosses do. They think as soon as they sign their name on your check that they have the right to treat you like a fuckin' animal. Like you're their property.

MRR: It's like that with any job. Any job, they dangle it over you like, "You better be grateful that you're here. There's twenty guys behind you who want your job."

Pat: Most people have to take that. Especially if you have a family. What are you going to do? Let your kids starve because of your pride? That song wasn't a realistic thing. It wasn't like I immediately quit that job, "Fuck you, no one talks to me like that." It was just a representation of my frustration at that point. Work is modern slavery. It really is. It's like the chains are, "Do what I say or you will starve, you will lose your house, or you will lose your car." A lot of people are totally afraid of that. I can't say that I'm not scared or anything. There's shit that I've taken at my job that is just ridiculous. Whether it's legal or not—just try to start a union at your small business job. You'll be fired so fuckin' fast! There's really no power for the workers anymore. Like you said, there's twenty guys lined up that will take that job. Especially in Tennessee, a fire at will state. They don't have to have a reason to fire you! They can just fuckin' fire you! Most jobs around here will give you a 90-day evaluation period. The first time it (fire at will) was brought to my attention was five years ago. I got a job working at the zoo, and they made it very clear to me that it was a fire at will state.

MRR: What about the lyrics to the song, "What Dream The Dead"?

Pat: This was a particular instance that song was written about. I was twelve or thirteen years old. I found a box in my dad's closet that had some pornos in it. I had one of his tapes in my VCR. He came in my room, it was Christmas day, and he came into my room, and I guess he thought it was a tape from Blockbuster. He came in and opened my VCR and got it out. He saw a tape in there, and I guess it didn't click to him that it was his tape. He immediately walked over to the bed. He had a gigantic old class ring—my dad is a big man. He turned that ring around where the big end was palm down and started slapping the shit out me. Just slapping the shit out of me. Then he rolled it back around and just started punching me in the head. He beat me unconscious. When I woke up he was still in the room with me. I got out of my bed and I went after him. I don't even know where it come from, but I was like I'm going to kick this guy's ass, and he just beat my ass again. (laughter) He knocked me out two times on Christmas day. My dad was always the guy who would take his belt off in a heartbeat. He didn't care where you were, he would beat your ass. That was his answer for anything. Any time I was a kid; I lied, or I broke a window, or something. That was the answer—kick his ass. It escalated, when I got older, from whoopings with the belt to actually getting punched in the head. My dad is a big guy, and when he hits you you've been hit. For personal reasons, and I know there's a lot of people out there who have suffered the same thing, it's always good for me when I read something, or hear a song and I can relate to it in that way. It's really therapeutic for me to know there are other people who went through the same thing I went through.

I think a lot of my problems—I have a very short fuse. I try not to fight a whole lot or anything. I have a temper and I'm very distrustful of people. I'm very wary of who I associate with. I think a lot of that comes from my relationship with my father. I think a lot of that comes from—there will be another song about that coming out on our next record—about being sexually abused when I was in kindergarten. Not just the fact that I was abused, but the fact when I tried to tell my parents about it, they didn't believe me. They thought I was full of shit. My teacher was sticking her fingers up my ass and my ass was bleeding. They thought I was making it up, like there was no way that woman would have done that since they've known her their whole life. They worked at the same school or whatever. There are a lot of songs I've written about shit that has happened to me when I was a kid. I'm assuming there are still a lot of young punks listening to hardcore music. Although it seems the the thirty-year-olds are playing it (laughter).

MRR: Well the good bands at least.

Pat: You were saying something about the personal being taken out of punk rock. I try to stick it in there as much as possible. I love nothing more than someone coming up to me and saying, "Man I read that song, that same fucking thing happened to me when I was a kid, or I thought the same fucking thing."

MRR: When you say "personal lyrics," now, people assume you're being emo.

Pat: I think that it's ridiculous that hardcore bands are afraid to write songs about their feelings. I don't think there's been a song yet where I've written about my girl. (laughter) I don't come right out and sing about what sweater I was wearing that night you broke my heart in October. Hardcore is about emotion. Call it emo if you want. I think it should be used to express anger about more than political issues. To me, punk rock is the greatest emotional punching bag ever. I can get on the microphone and scream until my head hurts, and roll around on the floor and get all of this crap out of me. Sometimes I see bands and the singer just stands there and sings. I think that's what makes the difference between me and them, because I'm freaking out and flopping around because I am thinking about what I'm singing, and it is personal to me. And it fucking pisses me off to no end! It energizes me. That's what still gets me excited. I don't listen to a lot of new hardcore or punk bands because they don't make me feel like that. Get out your Negative Approach seven-inch and listen to it. That kid was pissed! You can listen to it and relate to it. You can connect with him there. I think when you personalize things like war, or scene politics, or racism, it has a lot more of a profound effect on people than just stating the facts, or saying, "It's wrong to be racist. Smash the State! Boycott Taco Bell!" Give them a reason. Put some sauce on it. Let them know you wrote that song because you were pissed. I didn't just write that song because it was the topic of the day. Or because we need twelve songs to fill out this record, and I figured it would be cool if I wrote about this.

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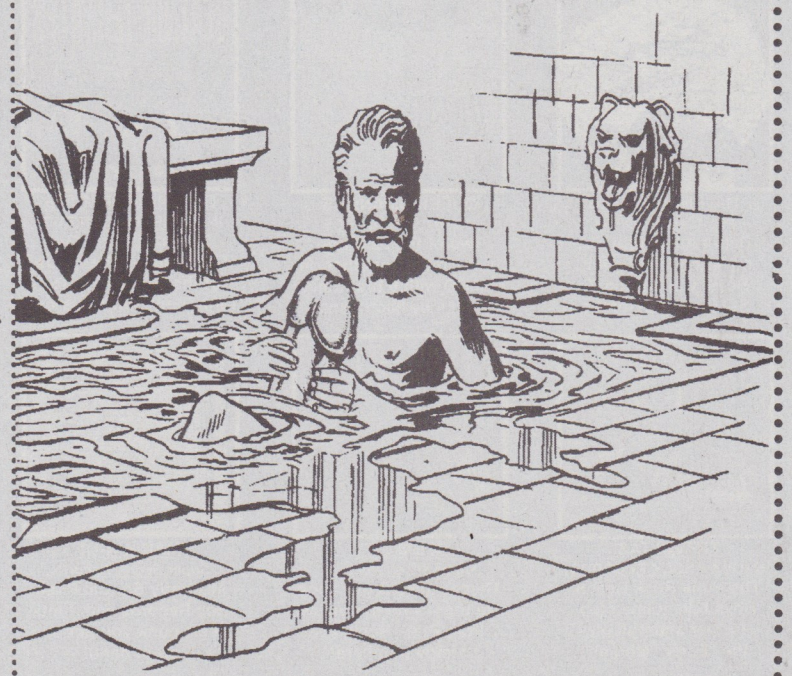

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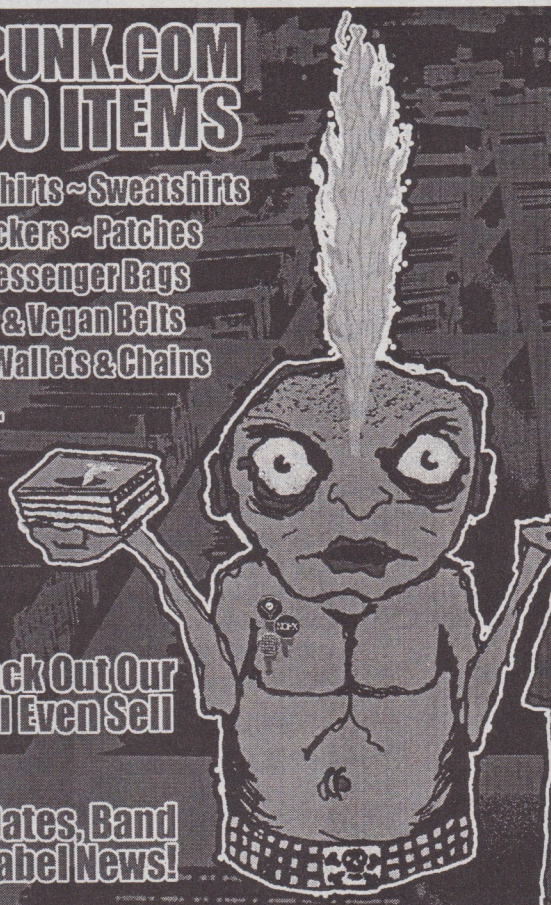

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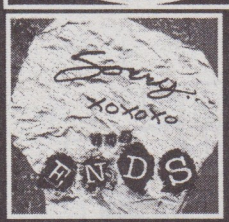

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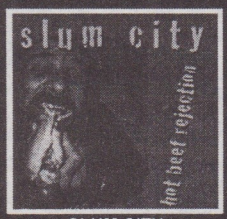

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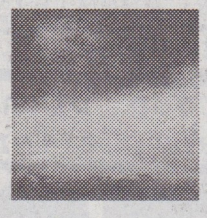

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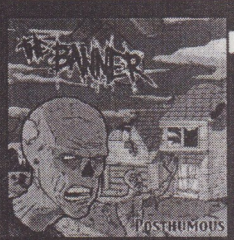

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THE MARKED MEN

Quite possibly the greatest band in Texas and unquestionably a group of upstanding young citizens, after a show in their home town of Denton, TX, three of The Marked Men (Jeff refuses to give interviews) Joe, Mike and Mark, spoke with this interviewer and a group of drunkards. The conversation unfolded as follows.... Interview by Dillion Strange.

MRR: You guys had a good show tonight.
Jesus! Anyway, what did you think of the show?
Mike: It was good.

MRR: All right, next question, this band came from the tattered remnants of the Reds. You want to tell me a little bit about that?
Mark: No not really.

MRR: What the fuck's wrong with you guys? This is an interview-you got to answer questions.
Mark: All right. Yeah, the bass player for the Reds, Chris, packed up and moved away to Japan to teach English. So we're basically the Reds minus Chris plus Joe.

MRR: The new record is on Rip Off. Plus, you just had a 7" come out on Mortville. So, what's on the horizon for the Marked Men? Joe?

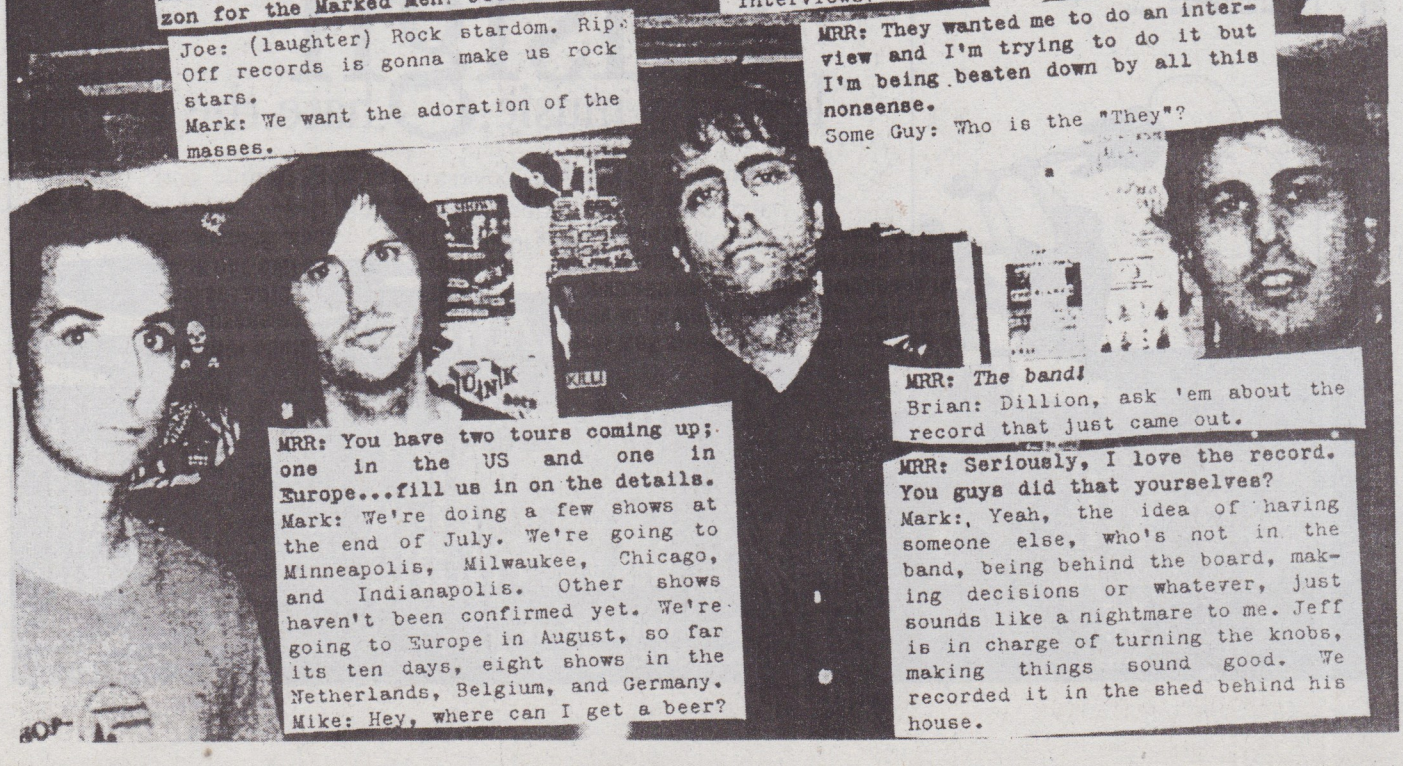
Joe: (laughter) Rock stardom. Rip Off records is gonna make us rock stars.
Mark: We want the adoration of the masses.

MRR: There's a keg. I thought there was a keg here?
Mark: I don't know. They can't get into the house. They lost the key. We're gonna have to break in.

MRR: Damn it, I thought there was a party here! What the F!
Mike: You know you can say the word.

MRR: What? Fuck?
Mike: Yeah.
MRR: There might be kids around or something.
(Some guy walks up)
Some Guy: So what is this interview for? What, do you just collect interviews?

MRR: They wanted me to do an interview and I'm trying to do it but I'm being beaten down by all this nonsense.
Some Guy: Who is the "They"?



MRR: You have two tours coming up; one in the US and one in Europe...fill us in on the details.
Mark: We're doing a few shows at the end of July. We're going to Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Chicago, and Indianapolis. Other shows haven't been confirmed yet. We're going to Europe in August, so far its ten days, eight shows in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany.
Mike: Hey, where can I get a beer?

MRR: *The band!*
Brian: Dillion, ask 'em about the record that just came out.

MRR: Seriously, I love the record. You guys did that yourselves?
Mark: Yeah, the idea of having someone else, who's not in the band, being behind the board, making decisions or whatever, just sounds like a nightmare to me. Jeff is in charge of turning the knobs, making things sound good. We recorded it in the shed behind his house.

MRR: There are rumors that you're bringing in Bob Rock for the next record?
Joe: Who the hell's Bob Rock?

MRR: You know, the Bob Rock.
Mark: F--- Bob Rock.
Some Guy: So Mark, what's it like being in a band with Joe? Every band has to have their liability and I'm not naming names...
Mark: We have to have experts in certain areas. I'm the self-appointed fascist leader, Jeff is the musical genius, Mike is the fast talker/fast drummer, and Joe is really into pornography. Any kind of question you might have that has to do with porn, just refer to him.

MRR: OK... So Bob Rock will be doing the next record, maybe? Anyway, the point here is, if I could just distill what the Marked Men really are-it seems to me like it's good punk rock, aggressive and whatnot, but with a pop sensibility.
Mark: Pop sensibility? Shit, we are a pop band. I love pop music. If it doesn't have a good hook, who cares?

MRR: Compared to the Reds, there is a seemingly more advanced approach-more open chords, more melodies in the guitar and bass.
Mark: Its not really more advanced. I think it's just more melodic. The Reds did a lot more with rhythms-Mike's crazy drum stuff.
Mike: Yeah, for me, it's actually much simpler than The Reds-I'm always trying to "play for the song," and since these songs are basically just pop songs, it's all more straightforward. The fact that we're trying to find that elusive "perfect pop song" calls for more linear drumming and less choppy stuff.

Mark: Mike is the ultimate ADD kid. Somehow that makes him do things an interesting way. He has a gift for making a simple song sound cool. How he does that, I don't know.
Mike: Like I was saying, you gotta go for the pop, which usually means simple. But I get bored so easily that I have to throw little stuff into the songs to mark time, so that I know where I am. I can't help it-I just never learned to count past four.

Brian: Hey you guys think you're like a prog band?
Mark: No-pop, not prog. What are you, drunk?
Brian: Do you do anything kinda prog at all?
Mike: What do you think?
Brian: I just like the word "prog." I'm asking you!
Some Guy: Hey I'm moving to Prague in two months.
MRR: You know, Prague escaped most of the bombing in World War II.

CONTACT:
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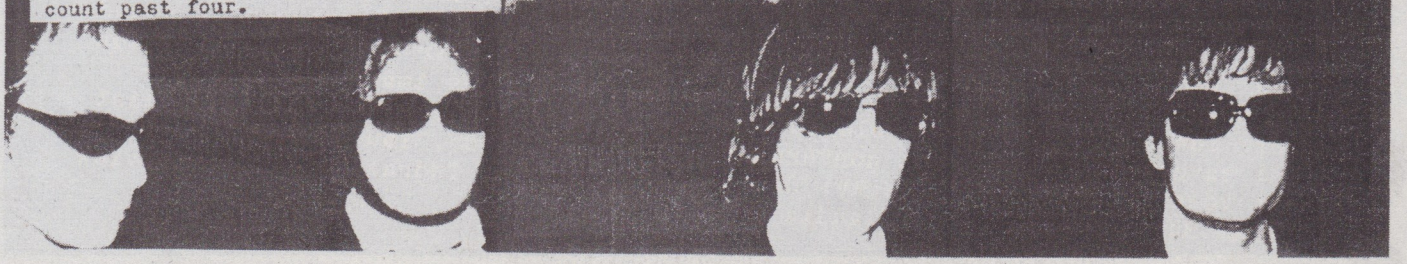
Anyway, Let me just ask you this question, I'm only addressing band members here, so you other motherfuckers shut the fuck up. Are you anti-keyboards or are you pro-keyboards? Will there be keyboards on the next record? I could see it happening easily.
Mike: Jeff and I have been working on this sort of epic early-80s rock opera, a la "Mr. Roboto"-era Styx, that involves copious synthesizers, a lot of spoken word for dramatic emphasis, and a 30-foot tall cardboard Pac Man. I think we could take it on the road.

Mark: Huh, I didn't know about that Mike. You guys need to let me in on that. For me, no keyboards, I don't hate keyboards, but if you wanna have keyboards. I think you should stay away from the whole retro gimmick thing. Retro bands are just boring.

MRR: What the fuck? You guys play punk rock. Some would consider that retro, some would consider that dead.
Mark: I guess, but I don't think we fall into that trap of being a gimmick band that tries to be all 60s or 80s new wave or whatever. I think some things are timeless and some things are fads, and minus the fad, a good song is good no matter what.

MRR: Joe, what's on the turntable right now?
Joe: Love, I listen to a lot of Love.
Mark: 'Cause you ain't gettin' any.
MRR: Wow, zing.
Brian: ZING!!
MRR: What about you, Mark?
Mark: Buddy Holly.

MRR: Mike?
Mike: I like that FM Knives record a lot.



The Dirty Burds

Why do the sweetest kittens have the sharpest claws? Ask London's Dirty Burds. You know their sort: more of a girl gang than a girl group, a riot of malicious female laughter and mascara-blackened raccoon eyes scowling behind seriously insolent shades. If the Burds look and sound like a bunch of vicious go-go dancers on a rampage, that's because they are-well, two of them, anyway. (Jacqui and Domi used to swivel and grind in the go-go cages at the notorious Frat Shack club nights throughout the 90s). After a long absence, the slut goddesses extraordinaire recently reformed with a modified line-up, ditching the 1960s garage-punk sound and look (long hair, go-go boots, and mini-skirts) of their earlier incarnation for an even nastier 1970s biker mama / Runaways / Ramones image and an irresistibly low-slung, snarly bubblegum punk sound. So come on, you sensationalist freaks: eavesdrop on a recent conversation with the Burds. You know you want to. Jacqui: vocals; Domi: bass; Becky: drums; Teri: guitar, Tedra: guitar. Interview by Graham Russell. Photos by Claudia Andrei.

(The conversation is flowing freely until I switch on the tape recorder)

Jacqui: Oh no. Now we've all gone quiet.

Domi: That's very likely, isn't it? The Dirty Burds being quiet!

MRR: Why did the original line-up call it a day?

Jacqui: It just fizzled out more than just breaking up, because we kept changing members.

MRR: When did you actually break up? I know interviewed you for *Maximumrocknroll* in 1996. *(The interview came out in '97, around the same time as The Burds' Toe Rag-produced debut EP* Dirty Shame *on Damaged Goods).*

Teri: I left in the beginning of '98, I think.

MRR: So really you were only together for about a year or two?

Jacqui: If you actually add it all up it's probably like six months! People see our records and see "1996" and think we've been together all this time, but we haven't.

Domi: But this (line-up) is the one.

Jacqui: Yeah, it's much better now.

MRR: Why did you decide to reform?

Domi: We missed each other!

Jacqui: We missed it. Me, Teri, and Domi were the original line-up anyway. Except we've all swapped instruments.

Teri: I'm still on guitar, but *(indicating Tedra)* we've got another better one!

Jacqui: We needed someone, we needed a—oh, no that's not very nice. I was going to say we needed a better one!

Teri: I really missed playing guitar. And Jacqui still wanted to do something.

Jacqui: But I didn't enjoy playing bass.

Domi: None of us wanted to play bass!

Jacqui: And Tina *(original Burds singer, Tina Caruso)* didn't want to do it anymore. *(Tina's since formed a new band, Suicide Milkshake).* Who forced me to sing?

Tedra: We talked about it for about a year. You kept saying, I'm not sure, I'm not sure.

Domi: I remember I was on holiday in Switzerland last year in July, and I got this message on my phone: "About that idea, we have a practice booked for next Saturday. Hope you can make it". I thought, OK, cool!

Jacqui: I went down to a studio in South London where no one would know me, with Tedra on guitar and a friend of ours, Maeve, who's in the band The Revenge, and they made me sing a couple of covers. Two Saints songs: "One Way Street" and "Misunderstood." And that was it: I thought, I quite like this! *(Jacqui yelps and snarls the lyrics rather than "sings." Apparently during the recording of "These Boots Are Made for Walking," Lee Hazlewood instructed Nancy Sinatra to "bite the words." Jacqui definitely bites the words).*

MRR *(Turning to the two new Burds):* Becky, were you in a band before this?

Becky: I play in another band. I play bass in the band Brain Washington.

MRR: What about you Tedra?

Tedra: I was in a band called Bullet Train. They're still together. It kind of crossed over for a while (between the two bands), but I stuck with The Dirty Burds because it's more my style of music. I couldn't do two bands because it was too much like hard work!

MRR: *(To Domi)* What's the official word on your other band, The Sires?

Domi: They haven't split up. We just live in different countries! *(Frontman Andy Sire moved to Germany recently).* We've recorded an album so we'll probably meet up and do a tour.

MRR: What led to the change in musical style and image?

Jacqui: I just think we like different music, really.

Domi: Do we?

Jacqui: Well, it's gone from 60s garage to getting into more 70s punk stuff as well.

Domi: It was never *that* 60s. It was always influenced by other stuff, not just garage.

Jacqui: I'll be into the 80s and 90s next! I've got to go through all the eras. You'll see me in power suits with big shoulder pads!

Tedra: The *Dynasty* look

Jacqui: We just wanted to do something a bit more punky, I suppose.

Teri: Plus we've got different people in the band now.

Jacqui: I was more into 60s stuff than 70s stuff before, and now I like them both equally.

MRR: What's happening recording-wise?

Teri: We recorded three songs at Toe Rag in April, and now we have labels banging on the door! *(Sarcastic)* We just can't decide which one to go with!

Jacqui: Please! Please! Let us put it out!

Teri: But we're being selective.

Jacqui: We're waiting for the right offer! We're just waiting to see. There's a couple that we're interested in. But a lot of people won't put just singles out unless you've got an album. So it's quite hard to just put a single out, unless someone's really into it.

MRR: I thought there'd be tons of punk labels that just put out 7" singles…

Jacqui: Maybe we just haven't been that good at sending it out!

MRR: Tell me about some of your new songs. Dirty Burds songs are usually bitchy and sarcastic and about real people…

Jacqui: No! Well, they kind of are …

Tedra: We all look at Jacqui!

Domi: The thing is, you meet people and you just want to write about them.

Jacqui: (Our songs) are influenced by real people, and then I add bits that aren't true…

Tedra: And then you make it rhyme.

MRR: It's got to scan.

Tedra: And make it as funny as possible.

Jacqui: We're really proud of our new song, and I'm not going to be able to look at them when I sing it. It's called "Too Short." I don't know how I'm going to sing it without crying with laughter, especially if he's standing in the front row. So I'm going to call all the tall men to the front, and then say, "This for all you guys in the back that we can't see!" But we *are* joking. It *is* a joke. It *is* tongue in cheek. Anyway, there are loads of songs about women being slappers or whatever. We're getting our own back. I don't know. Maybe I'm talking bullshit. But I'm not going to tell you who the songs are about. I'm not going to tell you who "Sick Bitch" is about. She'd come and beat us up. *(New song "Sick Bitch" sounds like they're trashing another chick. Their old track "Stripping Housewife" was in the same vein: songs savaging would-be female rivals cut from same template as Blondie's "Rip Her to Shreds" are something of a Dirty Burds speciality).*

Tedra: She's that tough, as well.

Jacqui: She pretends to be. We'd just run a mile!

MRR: Has the subject of the song heard you play it yet?

Jacqui: No, but her friends might have. And they don't realize. They're dancing away to "Sick Bitch" and I'm, like, "Yeah—it's about your mate!"

Becky: My friend said that for the cover (of "Sick Bitch") we should just have a naked woman covered in puke.

Teri: No, but we really like people. There are just a few people who …

MRR: At least you're working it out creatively. It's a cathartic thing. You're writing songs about them as opposed to punching them in the face.

Teri: We smile to their faces…

Jacqui: And then we write a song slagging them off behind their back! I've already written a song about a couple of people called "The Mingers." And we're going to do one called "Top 10 Hit"—it goes "We want a Top 10 Hit." That's in the pipeline.

Teri: We got lots in the pipeline. The problem is at our band practices we just end up gossiping. We arrange to practice for four hours on a Sunday and are actually using our instruments for maybe an hour of it.

Jacqui: But that's how we get the words. Someone will say something that's just a really good one-liner and I think, *Oooh!*

Tedra: The lyrics start coming out.

MRR: What about the song "Denim Delinquents"? That's what you and Tina Caruso call yourselves when you DJ together.

Jacqui: That's from an old 70s fanzine. I just thought it was a good name for a song. It's not actually about anyone.

Teri: We all wear denim. We're all delinquents.

Jacqui: Ripped knees!

Teri: Even after all these years we still talk about the same stuff. Boots. Boys.

Jacqui: Shoes! It's really sad! We talk rubbish. We talk about boys. We talk over top of each other.

Becky: We sound like a chicken coop.

Teri: We've had a few friends down to our practices. In the rehearsal studio there's a little place where you can just hang out, and our friends said, "What the hell's going on? It sounds like there are a million people in there!" And I said, No—it's just us!

MRR: I remember when you told me you were re-forming that it would sound like a "female Datsuns" or D4.

Tedra: No, the gay Datsuns!

Jacqui: What we were joking about is how people like the *NME* always compare bands. Like The Donnas are the female Ramones. Or Sahara Hot Nights are the female blah blah blah. No one says a male band is a male anything. I hate that. So we said we were going to be the "gay D4" or the "gay Datsuns." It's a joke.

MRR: It's a way of maintaining the status quo.

Jacqui: It's keeping it *male*, really.

Teri: It just makes it easy for the fucking journalist.

Jacqui: Everyone at the moment is being compared to the MC5 or The Stooges. So, yeah. The gay D4. The gay Datsuns. The gay Saints. That's what we want to be known as.

Becky: The gay MC5.

Jacqui: The gay Stooges. Just put "gay" in front of everything.

(Somehow the topic strays onto Jason Timberlake wearing an MC5 t-shirt and the current high street trend for bogus "punk" fashion. At the higher end of the scale, Christian Dior is selling haut couture studded leather belts for $533).

Jacqui: Apparently Wayne Kramer is still laughing about that, Justin Timberlake wearing an MC5 t-shirt.

Becky: Jennifer Aniston was wearing one, too.

MRR: I remember seeing a photo of Shania Twain wearing a shredded vintage Ramones t-shirt.

Jacqui: At least you would know who The Ramones are. With MC5, they just think its letters and numbers. "Oh, that's nice typography." You're wearing a *band* t-shirt…

Becky: But didn't (Wayne Kramer) sell the rights to the name to Levis?

Jacqui: Oh, yeah. Wayne Kramer said he needed the money and he's laughing about the idea of people wearing his t-shirt, and I think it's fine that he did that. But anyone who's actually an MC5 fan will not wear that t-shirt.

Teri: The thing about that fashion now is, what is going through people's heads when they're buying it? "I'm going to be a punk today?" It's the most un-punk thing you can do. Especially paying what they're paying for it—like 40 quid for a t-shirt.

Jacqui: You don't know what people are into now, because they've all got the same Joan Jett haircut or the same Ramones t-shirt. T-shirts with zips in—I can't wear that! It's so contrived.

MRR: One of the biggest gigs The Dirty Burds have played so far was a few years ago for The Wild Weekend in Las Vegas. What was that like?

Tedra: We weren't there!

Jacqui: I was the only one who was there! It was me, Tina, and a load of stand-ins. *(This particular line-up of The Burds who played in Vegas, when Tina was still on vocals and Jacqui still on bass, was very short-lived).* It was shit. It was horrible. I just didn't really enjoy it.

MRR: One of the American guys from *Flipside* who saw you play there said you were better than The Neanderdolls.

Jacqui: Yeah, well that's true. But that's like saying, "They were shit, but not that shit!"

Becky: Did you win any money?

Jacqui: I did, actually. I was all right on the old slot machines. Las Vegas was brilliant. The whole thing was brilliant, and go-go dancing was really good, but actually playing wasn't much fun. I think it would be more fun with this bunch of losers.

Domi: Oh, yes!

Jacqui: We were first on. We didn't get a sound check. *(Then-guitarist)* Maeve was told it would be cool, she'd get this and that lent to her, and they gave her this huge guitar she couldn't even play. We had good gigs in San Francisco. And LA was hilarious. They absolutely hated us! Which was fantastic. Me and Tina were really drunk and she fell off the stage. She was great. She was so obnoxious. So that was fun. Maybe we should change our name, because I don't think we're ever going to be able to play America again!

MRR: Weren't you thinking for a while of not keeping the name The Dirty Burds when you formed the new line-up?

Jacqui: We thought of The Quatros. That would have been a cool name. But bands re-form and change line-ups all the time and they keep the same name.

MRR: If you changed the name, you'd have lost everything you'd already accomplished under the name The Dirty Burds.

Teri: Yeah, we're still doing damage to the name.

Contact The Dirty Burds:
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PROVOKED

Interview by Dyl.

MBR: SO LET'S START WITH THE USUAL BULLSHIT- TELL ME WHAT YOU GUYS DO IN THE BAND AND YOUR FAVORITE RESTAURANT.

Scaba: My name is Scaba and I sing. I yell mad vocals. And my favorite restaurant is Azia.

Grant: My name is Grant and I play bass and I don't eat food 'cause food is for hippies.

Joe: My name is Joe and I play drums and my favorite restaurant is Hennepin-Lake Liquors (laughter)

Lefton: Andy, guitar, and any restaurant.

Lutz: Andy, guitar, and any place that's got pizza.

Random Passerby: (mumbles)

All: No, we don't want any. We're trying to do an interview! No you can't have a beer. (laughter)

MBR: So you guys just released an LP. How is that going for you? How did it turn out, recording-wise?

Lefton: Very well. I think it turned out very well. I am very pleased with it.

Joe: I'm happy with it.

Scaba: Yeah, I think everyone is pleased with it.

Lefton: Melvin-Ray studios did it and I think the production quality is a lot better than our previous recording.

MBR: Do a lot of other bands from here record with that guy?

Joe: Most punk bands do nowadays. He's kind of set the standard for punk recording-he's really good at it. Props to BK Ward for the artwork as well.

MRR: You guys have some silly song titles, like "Flying Monkey" and "Sko." How does that relate to lyrics in..what the hell are those songs about anyway?

Scaba: 'Flying Monkey" is about always on the road, just trying to find some place where you fit in. "Sko" is kind of an inside joke.

Lefton: Serious songs, but you gotta have a sense of humor behind it. Just gotta have fun-that's what we do. Like "Milk Carton" is a song about lost children but it's called "Milk Carton." It's kind of relative. There's a reference to it. It may be silly but it has a serious point to it.

Joe: "Dicking Out" that's another inside joke. Kind of a lingo thing. But it actually means something.

Lefton: Midwest terminology.

MRR: What does it mean?

Joe: It means you're fucking dicking out! (laughter) You're acting the fool.

MRR: So you guys had a summer tour last year. How'd that go?

Grant: Fuck you Dyl! (laughter)

Joe: You were the one getting the piss taken out of you! (laughter)

Lefton: You tell us how it went. Chalk one up for Joe.

Joe: What you remember of it, how was it?

MRR: I thought it was great. I got naked.

Scaba: A lot of shows got cancelled, but we all made the best of it. And everyone, wherever we were, where the shows got cancelled, got us wasted and set us up with places to stay, so there's nothing to complain about.

Lefton: The latter half of the tour was the best part. The first half was kind of dodgy.

Grant: Montreal rules!

All: Cheers to Montreal, and Yannick!

Lefton: Some East Coast stuff was really cool too, we had a chance to play with Poison Idea which was, eh, so-so, but it was definitely a good gig.

Scaba- Let's not get into that! (laughter)

MRR: Well, I guess that answers my next question. I was going to ask what was the maddest city of the tour?

All: Montreal.

MRR: What about that fest in Loborn?

Joe: That was kind of Montreal as well.

Scaba: That fest was mad as hell.

Lefton: That was really wild, because it was a punk fest, but it was a bunch of jock metal bands. It was really weird, I mean there wasn't really a punk rock theme to it, even though it was a "punk fest." I think pretty much we were the only official punk rock band there and the crowd was just postal.

Grant: We had a certificate that said we were punk!

All: (laughter)

Scaba: We got it framed.

Joe: It was endorsed by "the goddess of punk." (laughter)

MRR: So do you guys plan on touring the US again soon?

Joe: No. (laughter)

Scaba: I don't think we'll do the east coast-maybe the west coast.

Joe: Unless we get the *Profane Existence* curse, 'cause every band that tours Europe after they are in *PE* breaks up.

Scaba: No!

Grant: Knock on wood

Joe: We are going to try and break that curse. I think us and Misery are the only two bands that haven't done that yet.

MRR: All right. If George W. Bush, commander in chief, showed up at this Punx Picnic and asked for a veggie dog, what would you do?

Scaba: I'd beat his fucking ass! (laughter)

Lefton: Fucking cram it in his asshole!

Scaba: No, I don't think he would make it that far to even ask for anything.

Joe: He'd make it about a block away and he'd be murdered, cooked, and fed to the dogs. That guy's a piece of shit.

Lefton: Someone brought an American flag and started burning it.

MRR: Yeah, I saw that.

Scaba: Yeah, we have a new song called "Beating around the Bush." It's about, well, beating him up, pretty much. (laughter)

MRR: So, ah, Joe, how much do you love meatloaf?

Joe: That's Andy (laughter)

Grant: That's Leffer, dude.

Lefton: Yeah, I love it so much that on my last birthday Scaba actually went out of her way and made me a whole vegan meatloaf-pie-cake thing.

Scaba: With mashed potato icing!

Lefton: That we dropped on the floor!

Grant: You didn't even eat it!

Scaba: Yeah, we ate the whole fucking thing. Joe had some.

Joe: It was tasty.

Scaba: Vegan meatloaf kicks ass.

Lefton: Scaba's cooking is good.

MRR: You guys are touring Europe. Are you pretty excited about it?

Lefton: It's my first time over there, I know the rest of these guys have been over there, except for Lutz.

Scaba: Just Joe and I have been there before. But our friend Jay is setting up the tour, we're touring with this band SOL the first two weeks. So cheers to those guys.

Lefton: We're finishing at Zorofest.

Scaba: It's going to be mad as hell.

Joe: It's going to be very unhealthy.

MRR: So I keep hearing a lot of talk after the war about how a lot of European punks have been, well, not mean, but they are giving shit to American punks for being American. What's up with that?

Joe: I think that's fucked up. Because as punk rockers you should realize that we have no part in this whole system and what goes on in our government, because we're not calling the shots

for George Bush and his army. That's why we're doing this. I mean it's obvious that we are against what's going on. It just doesn't make any sense that somebody would look at a group of punk rockers from the US and say, "Hey, you're government is fucked up and look what your country is doing." Like we give a fuck, you know? Read our lyrics. Look at us.
Scaba: It's the same thing with 9-11. I was there three days after 9-11 and mostly Germany and I got a lot of shit. There was a lot of "fucking Americans, bla bla bla. I was like, you know what? I don't judge you for Hitler and what he did."
All: Oooh, whoa. (laughter)
Scaba: I'm comparing George Bush to Hitler right now, ok? He's a fucking asshole and no one wants to have anything to do with him. So just 'cause you are from Germany and Hitler was a piece of shit, I don't judge you, because we have Bush as a fucking leader and we had nothing to do with it. It's kind of frustrating. Punks should be punks and unite and protest against everything that's going on all around the world.
Joe: We're all fighting for the same cause.
Lefton: A lot of people need to recognize that, no matter what country you are from.
Joe: Yeah, look at somebody and base them on what their fucking government does? That's fucking ridiculous. It's almost like being racist or something-automatically judging someone based on their country in general.
Scaba: That's what punk is totally against! It's about equality and unity.
Joe: It just doesn't make any sense and there's no fucking room for it so get over it.
Lefton: Damn straight. Up the fucking punks!
All: Up the punks. (Bottles clink)
MRR: So what do you guys think of monkeys?
Grant: Have you ever watched animal channel? That shit's funny!
Joe: Monkeys are mad as fuck! I'll say it again, all animals are punk.
Scaba: Chickens, zebras, horses... (laughter)
Lefton: Lemurs! Lemurs are fucking cool.
MRR: I got one more. So we went over there and fought a war and everything, and there's no weapons of mass destruction! What's up with that?
Grant: Of course not. It's 'cause Joe has them in his pants. (laughter)
Joe: Chalk one up for Tacolypse.
Scaba: No, he went over there for his father's shattered ego.
Grant: It's family tradition!
Joe: Gotta keep the economy going...
Scaba: Yeah, this one's fucking dying over here. Not as bad as most countries, but...
Joe: Just like 19 people hijacked planes and flew them into the world trade center-just like that. National Security just went over there like they owned the place.
Lefton: Once again America is walking around like, who carries the bigger stick. It's always been like that, and it's really fucking sad, because this fucking world is not getting any better.
Joe: And this sorry-ass American fucking public is eating it up like candy, buy everything that anybody says to... One of those fucking cock monkeys, once the war broke out and shit, was selling those-
Grant: Cock monkeys?
MRR: What's a cock monkey? (laughter)
Lefton: I don't know. I'd like to see what it is. I should watch more Discovery Channel or something.
Joe: The elusive cock monkey! (laughter)
Lefton: No those fucking ass clowns were selling those things you put on cars for like $10 or something like that. And people were just buying into the commercialism of the war, like it's glamorized.
Scaba: Well I just went to the gas station the other day and there were American flags and stickers for your car for free!
Lefton: I'm surprised they didn't charge.
Joe: Well, it's kind of like the whole new Homeland Security act. They butter everybody up to make it sound like such a fucking good idea when people don't even realize their freedom is in jeopardy. But it sounds so good when somebody is telling them that. It's for your protection! Only which is a crock of shit-it's fascism. It's fucking fascism at its finest.
Grant: It's my free ticket to jail!
Scaba: Fourth of July, Punx Picnic. Fuck 'em. Playing music, taking over the fucking park.
Grant: So Dyl, why are you called "fuck you Dyl"?
MRR: (laughter) I don't really remember!
Joe: What do you think of Jack Daniels and lawnmowers? (laughter)
MRR: Let's hope that video never gets out!
Joe: AJ, if you read this interview please!
MRR: Any final thoughts?
Scaba: Cheers to *Profane*-definitely!
Grant: Fuck you Dyl!
Lefton: Cheers to *MRR*. And *Profane*. Cheers to Dyl.
Lutz: I am at this interview. I just didn't talk. I'm just drinking beer.
Grant: He's really hungover. Poor baby.
Lefton: The new law here is that bars are open till 2 am instead of one so Andy left my house half blacked out after we went to the bar at 11.
Lutz: It was beautiful too. Got home around 5 am and went to bed at 6 am.
Grant: He looks like a wasted up turd (laughter).
Joe: July Fourth is now Punx Picnic day. Independence for the punks!
Scaba: Yeah, exactly.
Joe: All right, we're going back to the picnic!

Contact: Provoked, PO BOX 8004, Minneapolis, MN 55408

THIRD PARTY

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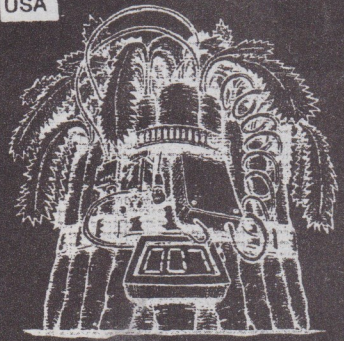

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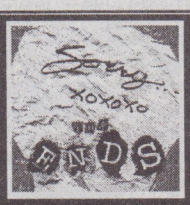

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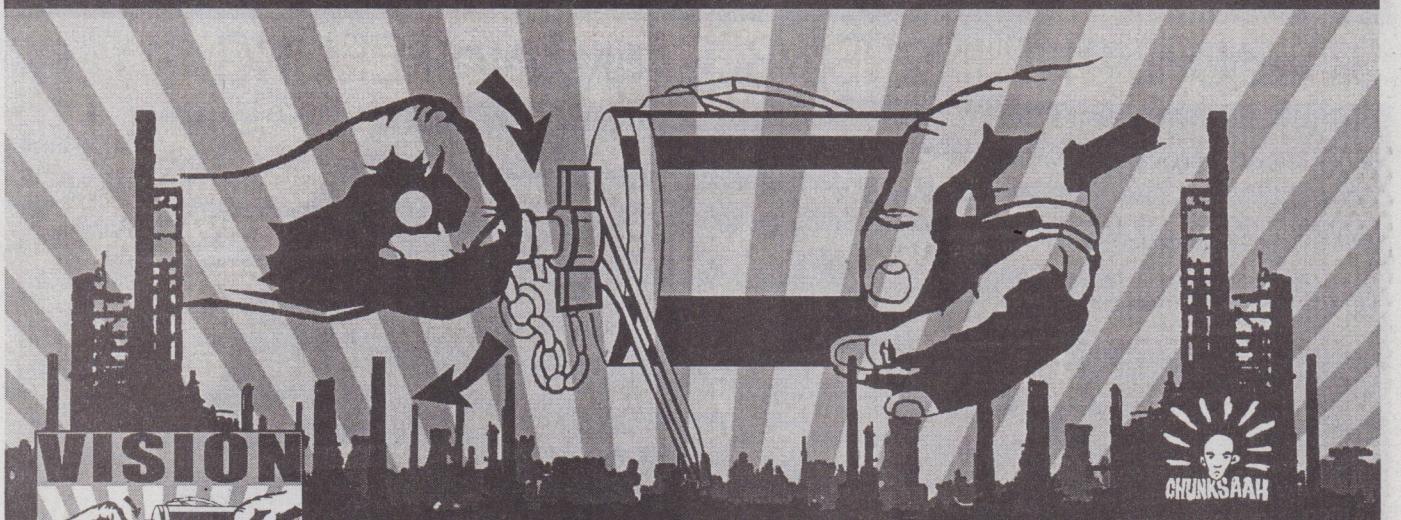

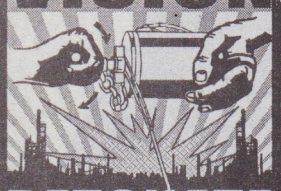

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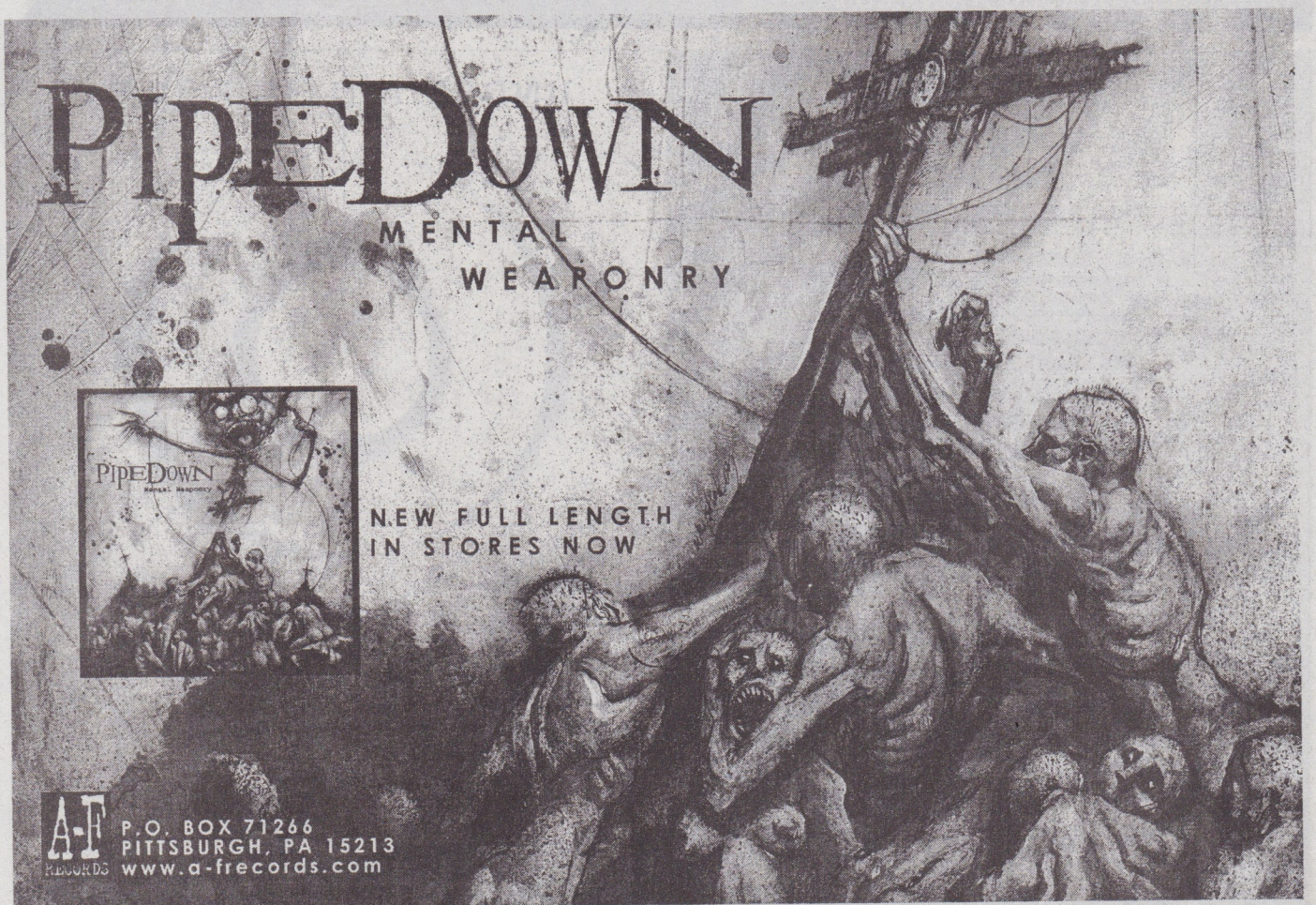

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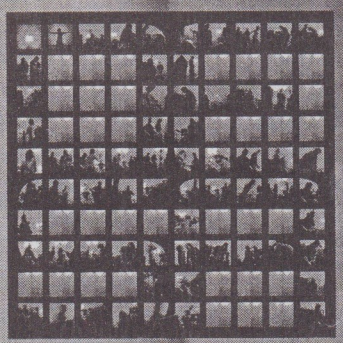

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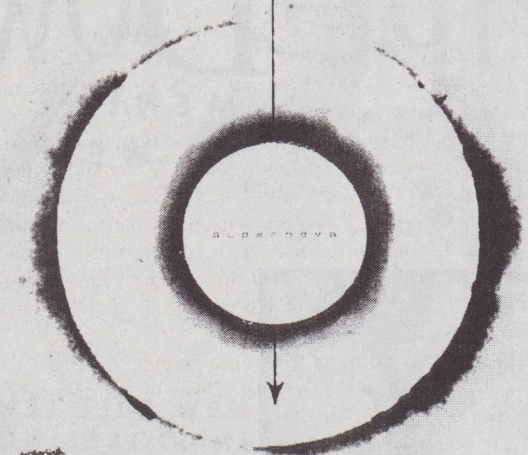

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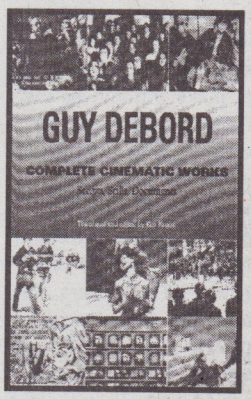


Guy Debord—Complete Cinematic Works
Ken Knabb, Translator & Editor
264 pages • $29.00
AK Press
674-A 23rd Street
Oakland, CA 94612-1163

Guy Debord is the most well known member of the Situationist International (the SI). To quote a known post-Situationist, Billy "De-bored," the SI "developed an increasingly incisive and coherent critique of Western multinational capitalism and Eastern bureaucratic capitalism, its pseudo-opposition. The new methods of agitation developed by the SI were highly influential in leading up to the May 1968 revolt in France. Since then--though the organization itself was dissolved in 1972--Situationist theses and tactics have been taken up by radical currents in dozens of countries all over the world, perhaps most notably (for our purposes) in the punk movement in England in the mid-1970s." He was the author of Society of the Spectacle, Comments on the Society of the Spectacle, much of the content of the SI journal (spanning a decade), and his autobiographical Panegyric. He was also a filmmaker. Debord is also notorious for the first showing of Howls for Sade, a film was cut short by attacks from the theater audience and staff due to its extreme nature.

Ken Knabb is the most faithful of the English-speaking post-Situationist milieu. His completely necessary, but unquestioningly incomplete translations of the SI journal, the *Situationist International Anthology*, have a decidedly "Debordian" bias. He has been given authorization by Alice Debord, Guy's widow, to do new translations of the body of Guy's work. This includes *Society of the Spectacle* and all of Guy's cinematic work. Knabb's translation of Society of the Spectacle is, by far, the most readable English version that exists. Arguably this readability has been at the expense of the complexity of Guy's work. Knabb has always made the argument that Debord's ideas were clearer than the turgid translations that had existed, and his translation echoes that perspective.

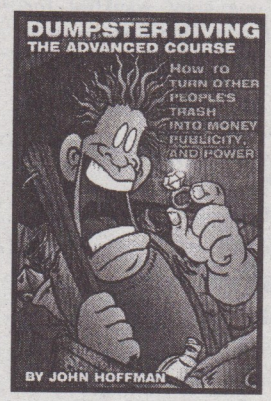
Posthumously, Debord will be best known for *Society of the Spectacle*, but while he was alive a large part of his notoriety, especially in France, was due to his films. Debord's oeuvre sits squarely in the avant-garde tradition established by "Brecht's notion of provoking spectators to think and act for themselves rather than sucking them into passive identification with heroes or plots..." Debord used still, heavily theoretical narration, sub-titles, and large amounts of cinematic "white space" that explicitly was not "escapist."

This book contains the scripts of all of Debord's work. It also contains some interpretation, commentary, and a brief introduction by Knabb.

Given that Debord's films are not story-driven, but are instead contextual affirmations of a political discourse, they stand up well in the book format. The editing and presentation of Debord's movies is crisp and effective. Narration is delivered in the main body of each page, and the visual presentations, (both images and subtitles) are presented in sidebar. There are also reproductions of many of the frames of Debord's films. Reading these scripts reminds one of exactly how uncomfortable viewing *Society of the Spectacle* is. Beyond problems of translation, the technique of this kind of cinema interferes, as a matter of principle, with easy viewing.

Knabb presents useful commentary alongside this source material. From a detailing of the scandals of the time to exposing some of the context of Debord's work, Knabb's is a sympathetic and illuminating voice. This book has obviously been painstakingly edited, surpassing every other AK Press title to date with its attention to typography, detail, and construction. The notes section alone contains enough exposition on Situationist themes to demand examination by anyone serious about the era.

Which leaves us with the role of this book today. Guy Debord passed from this world with a self-inflicted bullet to the heart. As a tactician, his moment of action has passed. His ideas have long since been digested and expelled by the systems he strove to describe and destroy. A sense of ease accompanies any review of the failures of SI. Their failures at achieving it all reflect positively on most of our lack of efforts to achieve anything. If a group of the most brilliant and astute thinkers, artists, and revolutionaries cannot achieve the impossible, then what hope do we have? While Debord's cinema does not reflect backward on these failures, or this question, it does provoke an examination of one's ennui. This attack is the last weapon that Debord's work wields, and Ken Knabb has crafted it into the beautiful shape that it deserves. —Aragorn!



Dumpster Diving: The Advanced Course
John Hoffman
119 pages • $20.00
Paladin Press
7077 Winchester Circle
Boulder, CO 80301

At first glance, by the looks of the glossy cartoon cover and the 8.5 x 11 size, this seems to be a goofy book on the topic of dumpster diving—it is in fact a shallow, egomaniacal book of drivel. Seriously, this book gave me a stomachache and nightmares.

Author John Hoffman has returned with a follow-up primer to his previous endeavor, *The Art and Science of Dumpster Diving*. From what I gather from Hoffman's numerous mentions, that book was a "How-to" on the topic of trolling for trash.

Dumpster Diving: The Advanced Course claims to focus on how to make money (well, some money), garner fame, and get a grasp at power from dumpstered goods, but centers around how one man has made a name for himself as the self-proclaimed master dumpsterer.

Hoffman begins with pages of personal history chronicling his "fame" from the sales and publicity of his first book, interwoven with the theory that the world will be saved by utilizing dumpster diving philosophies. While this does not seem far-fetched in a holistic sense,

Hoffman's tangents about impending interplanetary wars and dumpstered media bites draw the reader's attention far, far away.

Such is the sad case with many parts of this book. Smack in the middle of a hint or clue at how to sell a dumpstered police file or dumpstered bed, Hoffman throws some odd sex reference or bizarre theory at you. It's like the other night. I was at the Yankee Clipper over on 17th Street watching a ballgame and having a beer. As I waited for him to bring me my change, the geezer behind the bar, seeing that he had a captive audience (read: girl waiting for her money), proceeded to tell some fucked-up joke. I ended up leaving without my change, leaving the asshole a bigger tip than I wanted, and feeling pissed off.

Hoffman, with a captive audience that hopes to glean some insight on how to live a life free of the traditional routes of commerce, beats it over the head with pitying stories of how his wife left him, how procreation is the best thing ever, how (and this is for a whole chapter) Thomas Pynchon could have possibly, maybe, if you take into account this one thing, based the character of Dumpster Willard in his novel *Gravity's Rainbow* on Hoffman's father. All of this is somehow "corroboration" of the "fact" that Hoffman is the master dumpster diver. Amid the self-congratulatory rants, long-winded personal stories, weak attempts at finding a date, and sheer boring wingnut babble, there are a few useful tips.

Mark the Big Hearted Texan serves up a guest chapter on the ins and outs of industrial Diving. Most of the info is coupled with seemingly inflated market values for many of the computers and other gadgets found in the heaps of "Silicon Texas," but nonetheless it is interesting, and noteworthy that this guy has found so much stuff and continues to do so. A few readers write in about how Hoffman's first book influenced their lives. These sections show how people have applied techniques in Hoffman's first book, and dumpster diving, has changed their lives in positive ways.

Hoffman himself offers suggestions, wrapped up in yarns of his glory days at the WTO protests, on how to get supplies for the "revolution." Much of this is redundant and of the "duh" caliber for those who already know how to pry the lid off of a dumpster.

Of course I know that a certain amount of bragging goes along with the territory of dumpster diving. However, there is a difference between entertaining stories of a "big score" and a pathetic need to validate oneself. Ultimately, this book is one giant wankfest for Hoffman. I mean, come on, he ends the book with an actual personal ad for himself. Yuck.

—Sara Double-Ears

$30 Film School
Michael W. Dean
507 pages • $30.00
Premier Press • 25 Thomson Place
Boston, MA 02210

It might seem strange to have a "how to" resource book in the pages of *MRR*, but Michael Dean's tone and DIY devotion makes this manual fit. This is a great place to start when the desire to create moving pictures creeps up.

Before wasting a bunch of precious time (for yourself and for those nice enough to help you realize your vision) reinventing the wheel, read this and then read more filmmaking books on specific topics. It will save time and heartache and when you are making a no-budget film, there is no deficit of heartache. The spectrum that *$30 Film School* covers is impressive. The basics of filmmaking, along with things that didn't even exist when I was in film school, like DV cameras and DVD authorizing, are discussed. Dean's tone is informal, direct, and knowledgeable.

Through his extremely hands-on DIY approach to filmmaking, he helps the reader envision how his/her project could actually be completed and seen. "DV-filmmaking is the...new punk rock, the new medium accessible to everyone to help tell their own story." I would debate if DV is accessible to "everyone," but it is far more accessible than 16mm, that costs (last time I checked) $40 per 3-minutes just for film, and looks much better than old tape video. With this new freedom to create, there is also the fear of creating even more crap. I recently went to a senior showing of some film majors at a college in the East Bay, and it was the biggest bunch of DV garbage—it all looked flat and horrible. Don't make people sit through your un-thought- out piece of trash—please do the minimum of film study. Dean suggests watching movies—really watching them, and analyzing the flow of the shots, camera moves, and how different shots make the viewer feel. There are different emotional reactions to different camera shots and techniques. As a filmmaker, try to become aware of these differences and use them to convey something meaningful.

One of the biggest problems with budding filmmakers (that I've experienced, anyway) is a lack of organization, and being extremely nearsighted. Every film school, including the $30 Film School, constantly screams "PRE-PRODUCTION!" in the faces of hopeful beginners. The more prepared you are the better, because there will always be other obstacles that no one could have anticipated. The more one knows about the entire process the more likely one can foresee potential bumps in the road. Reading about Dean's experiences in low-budget filmmaking helps disclose the steps involved and eliminates some of the mystery. Remember, even if one is looking to create an avant-garde masterpiece, "filmmaking is storytelling," and there are certain things that help tell any story. Thinking about what you want to say or how you want the audience feel is important to the process. Dean is aware of the urge to create something obscure, yet encourages "artists" to learn the basics and develop as storytellers regardless of how bizarre of an end product they are hoping for.

Dean reminds readers that writing is free, even if it is time-consuming. The best place to start editing and fine-tuning your film is way before shooting any footage. The motto for no-budget is "rewrite as much as it takes." He uses a computer program called Final Draft that helps with the traditional script form. There are books listed in the reference section that go into screenwriting with more depth, but this step should not be overlooked. Even documentaries should have working outlines and tons of planning. No film comes out exactly like one envisioned, but having a vision is extremely helpful. "Without planning and writing, you don't really have a movie."

The chapters on fundraising and promotion are very valuable. These two monumentally important aspects of making a film are seriously overlooked in many university film programs. This limits the freedom and opportunities young filmmakers realize they have. Actually making one's unobtainable masterwork all depends on how one is able to raise and utilize money and resources. Dean suggests not quitting your day job so you won't have to compromise your art, constructing a realistic budget, and putting (any) all the money you make from your films back into the process of filmmaking. Having a day job and limited resources means that production might take some time, but look at *Eraserhead*. A labor of love is often worth it. Though Dean says at one point that he is "not opposed to commercial ventures," he does through this book state that the goal should not be to "make it" and that starting with a DIY ethic means that the love of independent filmmaking has to be first and foremost.

The production chapters are a good place to start, but the subjects of lighting and camera work are so huge that he is only able to scratch the surface. Anyone interested in making a good-looking film might want to do more reading on these subjects. Along with the bookwork, it's a good idea to run test footage in different locations with different lighting setups and trying camera moves before having "cast and crew" have to sit around waiting for some glitch to be resolved. Dean knows through experience that the more information a filmmaker can give

his/her "crew," the better. Having and knowing in detail one's shooting schedule in advance and reminding people is vital to getting a film made. Dean also recommends respecting those kind enough to help for free, having some food, and trying to make things go smoothly at the start.

This book cleared up some confusion I had about computer capabilities with editing (video and sound) and DVD production. There is much technological information here and it is very straightforward. Dean compares editing programs and claims that any of them will work, but some are more easily available. After obtaining programs, legally or illegally, the best way to get to know them is to do the tutorials and work with something small to try new things. The disk that comes with this book includes demo versions of some of the computer programs that Dean discusses.

Through this volume, Dean compares being in a band and being a filmmaker. He favors the filmmaking. "It's cooler than being in a garage band because it's more powerful, easier, and you aren't stuck with the same three losers forever." So for those no longer getting the charge from playing in a rock band or doing a zine, film might just be the creative outlet you've been looking for. After reading this, it is hard to not be inspired to make cinematic greatness.

—Tobia Jean

We Ain't Got no Car #7
Jack Saturn
251 pages • $8.00
Recursive Delete
PO Box 3824
Portland, OR 97208

I live in Florida. We don't really get a winter. And our rainy season is a welcome reprieve in the summer afternoons, offering mystical rainbows and a temporary break from the merciless sun. Portland, however, is supposedly a different story, with their suffocating winters and ceaseless rainy days. Elliott Smith is from Portland, the locals say, offering the mopey, past-perfect pop star as some sort of prime evidence. Jack Saturn's *We Ain't Got No Car*, a zine-ish book or book-style zine, furthers the seasonal-affective-disorder theory with this 15-month diary.

Diaries can be tiresome affairs, especially ones with so little lurid detail or tangible action. I mean, the local record store's sidewalk sale is the initial major event in the book. And finding, acknowledging, and losing Megadeth's *Rust in Peace* is a serious deal for our narrator. Typically this would be treacherous material—what's your take on *High Fidelity*? But for all the white male collector-nerd details, Jack has crafted a focused, readerly narrative here. When we talk about music, we mean more than just these remnants of plastic and nostalgia, don't we?

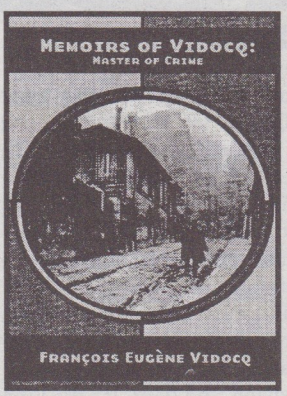
Growing a George Harrison beard and shaggy hair is another big episode. Buying an umbrella and confronting the Shins guy about their McDonald's commercial are others (wearing the same pants for three days in a row was the leitmotif of his last zine). The subject matter sounds mundane (and is), but when he's listening to two punks insult the surviving Beatles, the scene has all the intensity of a Hitchcock episode. Will he admit his guilt in liking those Wings albums? Continue to suffer silently? Or finally stand up and defend his pop sensibilities?

Jack's willing to use terms like "era" when referring to his own life, and repeatedly focus on signifiers like the roommate's lonely cat. But it's this open poignancy and vulnerability that saves the story, even as it makes daily life rough for the author. When he loses both grandmothers in the span of five months, the grief is acutely palpable. Characters enter and exit the story, but they're significant people (friends, relatives, lovers, and roommates) to the author.

The initial, reactionary punk response would be to dismiss this as *Burn Collector*-lite. Both men share obsessions with the heavy metal relics of their youth, and both carry a damning ambivalence to the requirements of modern American life. But where Al would listen to the distraught woman at the bar who caught her husband crying in the dark and listening to the Smiths (*Burn Collector* #12), Jack is usually the one safely cocooned in said dark room. A difference as telling as the sensible female voices here saying things like "Uh-huh I think you just need some direction in your life. Not spending all your time thinking about this kind of stuff."

My only real complaint: the book would've benefited from more drawings by Greig Means. That scanned bus pass art is played out, my friend. Spend less time in front of the computer and more out with rad people like Greg and the IPRC crew.

—Travis Fristoe



Memoirs of Vidocq: Master of Crime
Francois Eugene Vidocq
AK Press
674-A 23rd Street
Oakland, CA 94612-1163

The autobiography of François Eugène Vidocq is the fourth book in AK Press's excellent Nabat Books series, which is "dedicated to reprinting forgotten memoirs by various misfits, outsiders, and rebels." This particular volume has flair for exaggeration and romance, but at the same time, it is an intriguing and fast read.

This is hands-down my favorite in the series so far. It delves into the structure of crime fighting—and how without working with criminals, and the inescapable corruption that brings, crimes would never be solved. The publishers branch this out a little farther in the introduction than I think is necessary, but it's certainly something to think about.

Did you know that this story inspired the Sherlock Holmes novels? Or the modern style of detective work? Victor Hugo, Alexander Dumas, Balzac, and Dickens all based characters on this one man's life story. This alone should inspire anyone to get to know Vidocq.

He started out as a baker's son, dodged the draft, scammed, and got scammed, fell in love, got engaged, was moved in and out of jail cells, and eventually made his way to being a used clothing salesman. All this just in the first hundred pages.

However, Vidocq could not escape his criminal past, and he was blackmailed for many years until he finally could not stand to pay any longer. At this point, he made the proposal to start informing on his prior partners in crime. With this move, his life as a spy, and the historically significant part of the story begins.

All of the techniques in crime-fighting we see used today credit their beginnings to Vidocq's work with the Sûreté—such as: keeping criminal records, informants, ballistics, and most aspects of undercover work. He also started the world's first private detective agency.

After reading this book, all the other self-serving autobiographies I've read and enjoyed seem pretty pale in comparison. If you are at all interested in true crime, history that's fallen through the cracks, or even CrimethInc, for that matter, Memoirs of Vidocq is an excellent find.

—Joshua Stein

MOVIES

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI

BARGAIN COUNTER CULTURES

The post-60s generation probably remembers Harvey Pekar from his collaborations with Ralph Crumb for the underground American Splendor comics. The 80s generation probably recalls Pekar's prickly interviews with Dave Letterman, exchanges that at times came close to close to combat. And a battalion of new fans will probably get turned on to Pekar's work from watching Shari Springer Bernan and Robert Pulcini's feature film, American Splendor, an ambitious and frequently funny biopic of the quirky writer's life.

Harvey Pekar (Frank Giamatti) is a kind of everyman who's entertaining in direct proportion of the banality of his daily life. A file clerk for the Cleveland Veteran's Medical Center, he squanders his days filing health records for the ailing, dying, and dead. It's the kind of job that gets you thinking about your mortality. Pekar is naturally depressive anyway, so the job's a perfect fit.

His childhood was spent dodging the verbal abuse of his pals, who'd call him "Pecker." Now, in mid-life, his second marriage is quickly coming to an end, and wife calls him "a social embarrassment." And he kind of is. His gloomy flat is packed with drooping shelves of '78 jazz records, and the floor's a minefield of trash; it's as morbid a world as any normal person would want to escape from. His voice has been rendered hoarse by a nodule on his larynx, so now he can barely talk.

It's somewhere around this time that he meets fellow jazz fan Robert Crumb, whose underground comics are becoming an underground sensation. Harvey has a notion he can write comics, too, aside from being unable to draw anything but stick figures. When Crumb offers to animate the text, it's the beginning of a series of collaborations with several artists. His image would range from "a young Marlon Brando" to a pudgy, sweating neurotic.

The film does a nice job of interspersing the narrative with excerpts of his comics, which always seem to be funnier than the film's script. The actors here are often chosen for their uncommon resemblance to the actual person, and this sometimes works brilliantly. Just when you think that this or that acting performance might be over the top, in comes the real person, stranger and geekier than his actor counterpart. These portions of the movie are staged on a neutral white background, a kind of cinematic limbo, where the real Pekar offers his commentary onscreen. He's a dryly funny guy, and you wish you'd see more of him.

Pekar made several appearances on NBC version of the Dave Letterman show, and excerpts from the actual interviews show the rough and tumble chemistry between the two. Pekar is nervous and defensive, and Letterman more than willing to pick at Pekar's image. When Pekar blows up on the show (the only reenactment here), the results aren't pretty. Pekar is never able to quite match wits with the talk show host, and he always seems nervous about being on network TV in the first place. But given his aim—to move comic books—he can only blame himself.

Pekar again willingly exploits his image in American Splendor, and the results are modestly more flattering, or at least more balanced than his Letterman appearances. Like many of us, he just won't learn from experience.

"Another long day begins with longing...." begins one strip, a longing which is eventually met by a fan who works in a Delaware comic shop (Hope Davis), who drives all the way to Cleveland to acquire his latest comic. She's a ticking time bomb of nascent health disorders, and she's expert at recognizing obscure ailments from the Physician's Desk Reference because she fancies she has most them herself. In other words, these two neurotics are a perfect match. Soon to be his third wife (will he ever learn?), she's an unpredictable mix of unflattering directness and numbing lassitude, able to lie in her bed for days without moving.

The final third of the movie is a grim recounting of Pekar's battle with a malignant tumor, an episode in his life that would eventually win him and wife a National Book Award for My Cancer Year. The humor dissipates and changes into self-pity and resignation, and the film suddenly gains a severe emotional depth.

There's a lot to like in American Splendor, from the imaginative staging to its thoroughly convincing performances. It even retains the basic flavor of the original comic. The ultimate product, however, falls a few frames short of the original "Splendor."

While the documentary Dogtown and Z-Boys charted the roots of skateboarding with great success, Stoked focuses in on the life of Mark "Gator" Rogowski, who revolutionized the sport and, some say, helped undermine its purity. It's a story that has an incongruous mix of elements—amazing talent, rock star dreams, multiple identities, and murder.

In the late 80s, skating was essentially an underground sport—or at least it appealed to an underground sensibility. During the great California drought, skaters invaded and performed increasingly daring tricks in empty SoCal swimming pools, destroying them in the process and pushing the boundaries of the sport. And "Gator" Rogowski was maybe the most charismatic of the bunch, who combined an eye-popping athletic style and with an eye for style and fashion that thus far was missing from the sport. This ultimately led to commercial management by Vision Sportsware, who capitalized on the fad and made sure that skating items could be bought at Nordstrom's.

For Gator (and many of his friends), the rise of the sport and the attendant commercial sponsorship meant that a few talented kids had more money than they knew what to do with. Informal backyard skate jams metamorphosed into the glitzy Swatch Impact Tour. With his boyish Tom Cruise looks and edgy image, Rogowski suddenly become something like a rock star. Filmed promos with Gator became disturbingly vain and egotistical.

It's at this point—when he's raking in a six-figure income, with magazine covers and endorsements falling into his lap—that the spectacle of vertical skating became increasingly uncool, now replaced by the earthy appeal of street skating. As this new underground was forming, Rogowski and his management company were too far removed from the trends to see it coming. The master of vert was hopeless with street style—and the cameras would catch him failing, the soundtrack a chain of curses.

Director Helen Stickler mixes the interview segments with

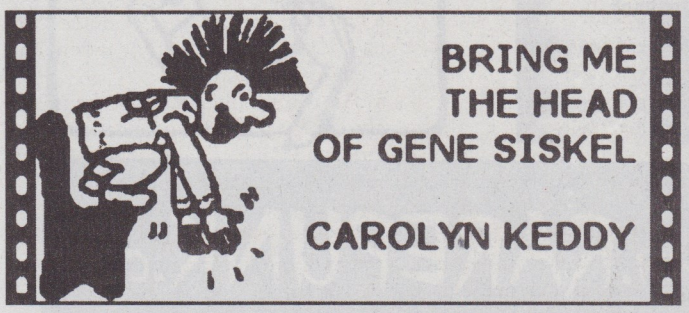
revealing video, offering a multilayered portrait of the skater and the times. It's the flipside of skating that Dogtown... wasn't able (or willing) to pursue. Stickler has an uncanny ability to distill pro skating's major moments in a few telling images, with the rest explained by her varied cast of skaters, promoters, and wanna-bes. She's particularly gifted at sketching in the personalities of the era.

Rogowski's longtime girlfriend confides that there were "two sides" to the skater, but that may be an understatement. He becomes by turns a skate star, an egomaniac, a failed street-stylist, a born-again Christian, and a murderer. Even during his trial, he manages to convince himself (albeit for a short time) that he's somehow innocent. Like any good performer, he switches images at the drop of a hat.

While a very strong film, Gator is handicapped by the fact that its star never appears in an on-screen interview. A wrinkle in California law prohibited a filmed give and take with the skater, so he leaves us with an unsatisfactory substitute—a sullen epitaph from the penitentiary. He explains what he can, apologizes for the rest, but offers us a one-on-one give and take. While uneventful, his statement does help bring closure to the film.

Most of the musical highlights happen early on, with tuneage from Bad Religion, Agent Orange, and the DKs pumping up the mood. (As Rogowski's life dive-bombs, you're likely to hear A Flock of Seagulls). The music here is an eclectic reflection of the times, and as the story turns grave, the soundtrack of his life turns to prison confessional. And even then you're not quite sure if his words are sincere or the construction of another image, this time of a confirmed penitent.

Comments? Email me at sjspinali@yahoo.com.



ORDINARY LIFE CAN BE PRETTY COMPLICATED

I am not a comic book reader. Somehow that doesn't seem to matter to me when it comes to seeing movies about comic book characters. I am not talking about Spiderman or Batman or any of your generic Hollywood blockbuster fare. I haven't seen any of those yet and probably won't ever. I like the ones about the more obscure comic books. The ones my record collector friends might lend me. I like Ghost World and American Splendor.

American Splendor (www.americansplendormovie.com) opens with a great scene on Halloween. A group of kids are trick or treating when a woman answers the door. She comments on all the superheroes present, but when she comes to the young Harvey Pekar, he is dressed as maybe his father would dress. When she asks who he is supposed to be, He answers, "I'm Harvey Pekar." She replies, "That doesn't sound like a superhero to me." He storms off without his candy, mumbling to himself.

The film American Splendor is based on Cleveland curmudgeon and file clerk Harvey Pekar's comics of the same name. Pekar is not a very affable guy. Most people aren't. He works a tedious job at a VA Hospital. He lives in a small apartment. He collects records. It is pretty much like most people I know except that he feels he has something to contribute to the world. After seeing the success, his friend Robert Crumb has had with comics, he feels this is the way he can do it. There is only one problem—he can't draw.

Fortunately, that doesn't deter Harvey, and he has a good amount of success with his comics. He meets his third wife Joyce because of them. His coworker Toby gets on MTV because of them. Pekar becomes a regular on Late Night with David Letterman because of them.

The David Letterman segment seems a bit heavy-handed. I remember seeing these bits when they aired and never got the impression there was any real animosity between the two of them. Of course, that was a long time ago, so I don't recall exactly what happened, but those were the days of Chris Elliott, where anything weird would happen. I am sure it all seemed like it was supposed to happen that way. In the film, the filmmakers use all the actual clips from the Letterman show, except the one were Pekar claims he and Letterman finally had it out. I tried to find a copy of that show, but couldn't. I did come across a commentary Harvey did on WKSU (www.wksu.org/news/commentators/) where he talks about the Letterman thing and says that he appeared on the show four times after wearing the controversial "Strike Against NBC" t-shirt. I am sure they were trying to make a point about Pekar and Letterman, but I didn't get it. It seemed like they were trying too hard to force Pekar's side of the story. The whole scene should have been reenacted or used actual footage. The combination of the two convolutes the story.

All of American Splendor is heavy-handed. That is what makes Pekar an appealing character. He is always feeling that someone is out of get him or that he isn't getting a fair shake. He fears the worst, yet has an amazing amount of self-confidence. The filmmakers use this dichotomy to make the film. They have the real Harvey Pekar comment on the film's Harvey Pekar. A cartoon Harvey pops up to add his two cents. There is even a scene where there is a play based on the comic books and another person plays Harvey.

In a similar vein, albeit more upbeat, are the comics of Lev called Tales of Mere Existence (www.ingredientx.com). It is a great, though too short, photocopied collection of comics, which comes with a DVD or VHS. Not having immediate access to a VCR, I read the comics first. They are short vignettes with titles like "Things I Must Accomplish," which has our hero worrying about all the things he needs to do, but not knowing where to start; "12 Reasons To Get Drunk Tonight," where he justifies getting drunk; and "Judgement Day On The Bus," where he figures out other people's lives and then decides he is an asshole.

The film is great too—one shot of a silhouetted piece of paper, while Lev draws his characters on it. The clips are edited in a sort of animation style. You see the act of drawing and the final product before it jumps to the next story. They are all different stories from the comic book. It is funny and creative stuff with just the right amount of humility and guilt.

I have to call him on it. Mike Thorn does not think Neil Hamburger is funny. That makes me laugh and want to make fun of him. How could he possibly think that? He mentioned this after he watched the DVD Neil Hamburger: Live At The Phoenix Greyhound Park (www.showmustgooff.com). So I took it home and watched it with just about anyone who came over to my house. Mike is wrong. "Why did the farmer start a punk rock band? Because he was tired of haulin' oats."

I don't like the start of the DVD. It starts off with a cameraman walking around the Greyhound Park while an off-camera girl asks people, "Are you here to see Neil Hamburger?" The questioned people are confused and just want to get back to their betting or eating. It's meant to poke fun at the ordinary people who don't know who Neil Hamburger is, but it just comes across as annoying. I feel more pity for the girl asking the questions than anyone else. Fortunately, you can fast forward over that part.

Neil's routine is his standard stuff. Neil walks out onto stage with three cocktails in his hands and immediately starts off with his observations. He's not always on the mark, but when he is it is hysterical. My all-time favorite Neil Hamburger joke, which I use any chance I get, is, "Why does Kentucky Fried Chicken come in a bucket? So you have something to throw up in when you're done eating it."

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to me c/o MRR, PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. You can also reach me by e-mail at carolynmrr@juno.com.

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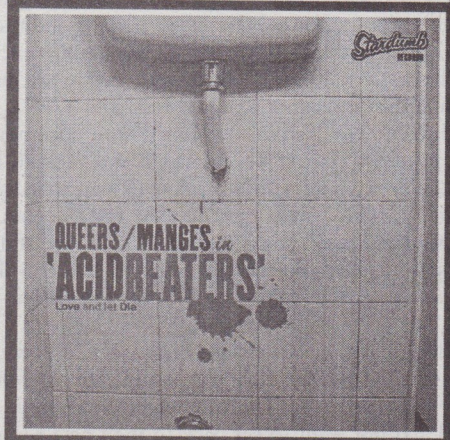

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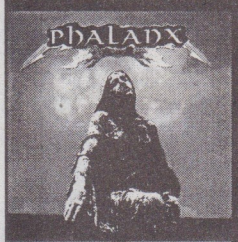

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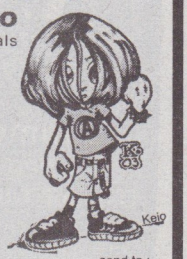

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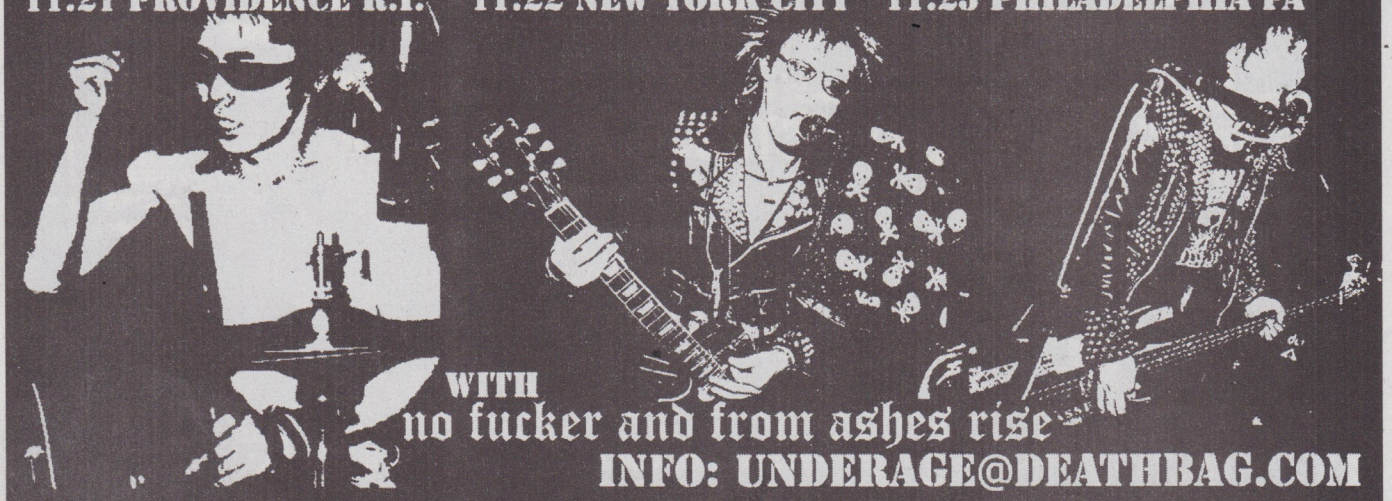

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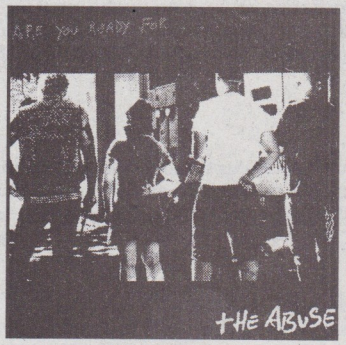


17th CLASS – "In Utter Contempt of the Human Race" 12"

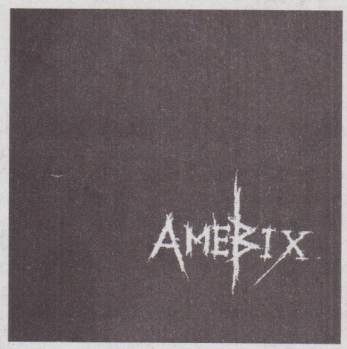
It's like early GRIMPLE, and it's like SHARP KNIFE. It is incredible. The slower songs have a GRAY MATTER feel to them. These fucking nuts hail outta Rochester, NY—I hope they leave and come to the Bay so I can see them. Totally independent great punk. (JA)
(Punks Before Profits, PO Box 1084, Buffalo, NY 14215)

ABE RUTHLESS – "No Nothin' Blues" - CD

Four tracks of plodding lifeless formulaic NEW YORK DOLLS-inspired rawk. Lyrics about love lost, drinking, and being washed up. Normally a winning formula, but not in these hands. Abe Ruthless plays guitar, bass and vocals and is helped out by Jeff Dahl on Drums and behind the board. The cover photo is too much, a haggard looking Mr. Ruthless in back of van drinking a Keystone Light...precious. His signature is lovingly reprinted on the disc itself. Not sure if he is a punk legend of sorts, I asked around and checked the Jeff Dahl records in the *MRR* library, no sign of him. (RR)
(Formula 13, PO Box 7385, Tempe, AZ 85281)

ABUSE – "Are You Ready for...." EP

Middle of the road femme fronted street punk. Unlike the CLIT 45 EP reviewed elsewhere this just doesn't have the catchy anthemic songwriting to reel me in. The influences are similar (old UK spikey punk), but this just doesn't move me. If you dig VICE SQUAD this may be your kind of gear... I'll pass. (TB)
(Strength Through Pain, www.theabuse.web100.com)



AMEBIX – "Make Some Fucking Noise" CD

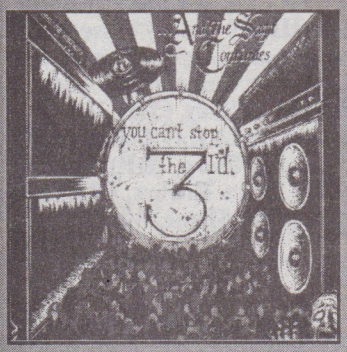
AMEBIX are *the* foundation on which so much of modern hardcore (MISERY, FROM ASHES RISE, BORN DEAD ICONS, etc) are based upon, and this live recording shows them at their best. Raw, dark and brooding hardcore; which drew upon that which came before it, using it to create something utterly new, unique and powerful. Much like The MOB they represent a dark and menacing perception of the world that spawned them—a world where the threat of nuclear annihilation and excessive poverty were part of everyday reality. You can just feel the desperation in the air when the Baron screams "...it's only paranoia!" during the chorus of "Largactyl." The melancholy of "The Darkest Hour" still resonates with as much force as the first time I heard it, while the steamroller attack of "Arise!" still sends chills up my spine. Completely brilliant. While most live recordings fail to really deliver any real punch or power, this legitimate issue of a bootleg from about two years ago completely delivers. (MT)
(Arson, PO Box 2087, Main PO, Kingston ON, K7L 5J8, CANADA, www.arsonrecords.com)

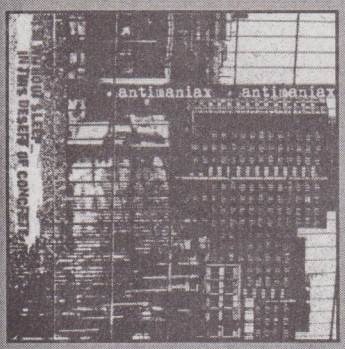
AMERICAN TOURISTS – "80s Gone Mainstream" EP

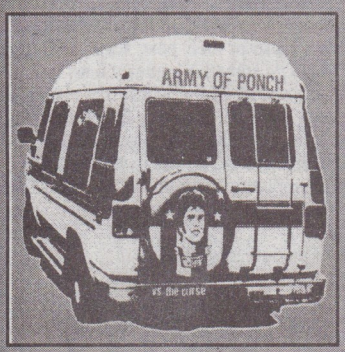
First off, what a great name for a band from Germany. I love it. Six songs sung in English and German, ranging from the more melodic JAWBREAKER, CRINGER style to a little more gruff, raspy-vocaled, driving emo hardcore, (emphasis on the hardcore). ICONOCLAST, or perhaps MOHINDER come to mind. Good stuff. (AS)
(Zietstrafe, Postfach 2822, 24518 Neumünster, GERMANY, www.zeitstrafe.de)

AN ALBATROSS – "We are the Lazer Viking" CD

You know if I was at a record store and I saw this CD with the psychedelic artwork and the band name AN ALBATROSS, I would *never* buy it. But as the world turns, I was assigned this for review. And you know what? It ended up being a damn fine listen. AN ALBATROSS blow through some herky/jerky/quirky screamo with lots of noisy organ parts leading the way. The thing is they keep the energy level (and nerd factor) maxed out, while keeping the songs short and precise. With all the speed and aggression, there wasn't enough time for me to loose interest in that quick burst of 11 songs. (RC)
(Ace Fu, PO Box 552 NYC, NY 10009 www.acefu.com)







ANCHORMEN – "Nation of Interns" CD

I've got to think that the continuing strip-mining of early 80s sounds will eventually lead many lads and lasses back to mid-80s American indie rock for fresh riffs. These guys seem to beginning the transition, which isn't to say that they sound like YO LA TENGO quite yet, but they do remind me of the type of band that would have a great track on a regional comp in 1983 that would hit on college radio. But now in 2003, that type of band can actually get a full-length out before American society can crush them like an empty beercan. Thus, these guys come off like THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS without going totally over into greeboid territory. Can you anticipate *future* nostalgia? (RW)
(Unstoppable)

...AND THE SAGA CONTINUES – "You Can't Stop the 3rd" CD

Montreal, Canada's ...AND THE SAGA CONTINUES deliver fast, aggressive late 80s- style hardcore with a touch of the crossover appeal that seems to be the time-loop pattern in HC these days, mind you though, they stand way more on the punk side of the fence than the metal side which makes them winners in my book. The singer has a great growly rasp to his voice that befits their style so well. Quality hardcore all the way. (WM)
(Contempt For Humanity, PO Box 463, Station C, Montreal (Quebec), H2L 4K4, CANADA)

ANTIMANIAX – "Desert of Concrete" CD

Man, this is some real shit. I think this could be classified as ska-core, though I haven't heard that word used in a long time. ANTIMANIAX mix punk and hardcore and ska in a way that reminds me of LINK 80, but more of the great CHOKING VICTIM. The band has preachy politically lyrics, which could get on my nerves in a different context, but there is just so much energy in this music, that it doesn't bother me. Good stuff, here. Well-written songs with no horns, though I think it would sound better if it was a little less produced. Layout is simple, and could be a lot better, but it's nothing too ugly. (WR)
(Household Name, PO Box 12286, London, SW9 6FE, ENGLAND, www.householdnamerecords.co.uk)

ANUBIS RISING – "Scales of Truth" 12"

If I was about to play Dungeons and Dragons this would make the perfect soundtrack. ANUBIS RISING somehow work together everything idiotic, obnoxious, and embarrassing about metal with everything idiotic, obnoxious, and embarrassing about the hippie movement into this -gloom inspired-fantasy driven-tragically epic guitar solos filled-space journey-three song train wreck that is completely fucking awful. *Please*, put down the instruments and go back to the bong! (VH)
(Transgalactic Ladder, PO Box 104, Wilmington, CA 90748)

ARMY OF PONCH – "Vs. the Curse" CD EP

Heavy, crunchy-guitar emo from Gainesville *a la* the No Idea Records sound. I think it's safe to site the No Idea sound as a musical sub-category at this point (even though this release is on an entirely different label). Whatever, *blah blah blah* ...ARMY OF PONCH is good. In the land fill pile of these bands out there, they definitely stand out as one of the better ones. Get this. (AS)
(Sabot, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL. 32602)

ARSEN*AKA KONIG DER MONSTER – "No Gods...Only Monsters" LP

ARSEN hail from Hamburg, Germany and play intensely emotional melodic hardcore in the vein of REVERSAL OF MAN or ACRID. Some of the more Melodic breakdowns are similar to HIS HERO IS GONE. Lyrics deal with depression, anger and politics. Powerful guitars and a driving rhythmic force. Interesting clangy breakdowns. Chaotic, full and dark. Screamed and intense dueling vocals. Bursts of vocal energy in painful surges make for intensity and spine chilling darkness. I recommend this LP fully. (LG)
(Arsen Monster c/o Arne Teubel & Marc Doliva, Friesenstrasse 89b, 28203 Bremen, GERMANY)

ATOMATRON / SUPRESSION – split EP

Another great one from SUPRESSION long running weirdos out of Virginia. Three noisy tracks here from them and all winners. "Sober Insomniac" is a short blast of angular and jarring guitars and bass with pounding drums and psychotic echoey vocals. "Boy vomits Hamburger in Full Moon Light" (great title that) takes the same formula and extends it a bit with some neat breakdowns and changes and noisy effects. Reminds me a bit of DAWSON the Scottish Gruf Wit band. The lyrics on this one are scathing "face like candy...heart like a scab" and suit the unhinged vocal style perfectly. Track three is a nice piece of noise that starts off with a squeal and builds to a dull roar before tapering off—nice nice. After hearing this I had to pull out their split LP with CRIPPLE BASTARDS from 1996 and give it a spin. ATOMATRON contribute three tracks on the flip. They are a three-piece (bass, drums and vocals) that mine somewhat similar terroritory to LIGHTNING BOLT, with less noise and distortion. The snotty vocals *a la* LE SHOK almost sound British and are a nice touch. A nifty split EP. (RR)
(CNP, PO box 14555, Richmond, VA 23221)

AVENGED SEVENFOLD – "Waking the Fallen" CD

If this is punk then I'm trading in my records tonight This is the most horrendous Hot Topic friendly, guaranteed not to offend the parents, alterna-metal that I've ever heard. Fuck this garbage. JED WHITEY put it best "Your record could have been okay, if I hit eject instead of hitting play. Your record is really at it's best when it gives my beer a convenient place to rest. Your lyrics suck and your songs are too long. You fucking hippie, get your head out of the bong. Your disc's a waste of space and your sleeve's a waste of trees. Your record could be okay, if you found a drummer who could play. Your record could have been all right, but every single song sounds like 'Rock and Roll All Night.' You play too slow; your guitars aren't loud enough. Trade in your Fender for a fucking Big Muff. The drawing board is where you should have stayed. We used your record as a beer coaster, record as a beer coaster." (MT)
(Hopeless)

AWEEKINJULY – "Nearfatalexplosion" CD

Don't get me wrong. I'm a sensitive chap. I've been known to cry (at the appropriate times, only, of course) while watching movies. And I even own a KNAPSACK record, *and* really love the first track on it. But if you're going to have beards, and be sensitive, and drag a backpack around, you have to do better than this meandering stuff. To be fair, none of the dudes in the picture have beards, nor backpacks, but I suspect it's cuz they are too young to grow facial hair and have difficulty stringing a sentence together, and hence don't bother with intimate

journals. Bit of a waste of energy really, all that effort heading nowhere fast. Bet they'd really love to get on MTV though. (RK)
(Orange Peel, PO Box 15207, Fremont, CA 94539)

BBS PARANOICOS / EMS – split LP

From Austria, EMS sound like old PROPAGANDHI and NRA sang in German. It has its moments, but the relentless Epitaph 1992 drumming gets old after awhile, still it not bad. BBS PARANOICOS are from Chile and play heavy metal tinged hardcore with political lyrics. It's okay I suppose. (AD)
(Volxdroge, c/o Dirk Dommaschke, Knechtedenstr. 13, 40549 Dusseldorf, GERMANY)

BANNED – "Imitating Art" CD

Above average melodic punk, with enough twists and turns to keep me engaged throughout. Difficult to describe as it sorta falls between the cracks category-wise although if you added some of the hooks of Chi town favorites the ARRIVALS with some of the anthemic elements of the GC5 you'd at least be at the same ballgame. Me like. (TB)
(PO Box 2517, Peter Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009)

BEER GARDEN – "...Coming After You" CD

The unconventional meter in the gruff, female vocals set this apart from the BLATZ tendencies of this quartet. BEER GARDEN are also more worldly with many literary references, literary inspirations, and a taste for whiskey. The BEERS aren't afraid of slower moody parts or acoustic guitars that help intensify musical dynamics. I was also impressed by their cool strategy of hiding liner notes under a black CD holder on the jewel case. These freaks are pretty cool, but they got "I never promised you a beer garden" stuck in my head. (HM)
(Drunk Tank, www.drunktankrecords.com)

BENEATH THE ASHES – "Nailed to Your Ruins" CD

The first full-length release from this tech-metal hardcore unit from Sacramento, CA. Fans of DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN, BOTCH, et al. would find much common ground with these extreme boys. A great recording/production makes them sound pretty huge—90 feet tall, bigger than houses. From the people behind EMBRACE THE END and BURY MY HEART. (WM)
(State of Grace, PO. Box 8345, Berkeley, CA 947007, www.stateofgracehc.com)

BEN GRIM – "Retro" CD

I'm overjoyed to see this release. I loved this band when they were around in the mid to late 90s. Unfortunately they never seemed to break out. This collection gathers all their recordings as well as some demo stuff. Similar in sound to the DESCENDENTS, the PARASITES, and the ATARIS. Pop punk fans of the world need to discover this late great band! (RL)
(Boss Tuneage, www.bosstuneage.com)

BERNICE BEACH – "Runaway" CD

Pop punk with an attitude from Italy. Sounds similar to early RANCID—even the vocalist's got the snotty nosed Lint thing going on. I'm not too into this but it's decent. (SR)
(Mad Butcher, Kurze Geismarstr. 6, D-37073 Gottingen, NETHERLANDS)

BIRDFLESH – "Night of the Ultimate Mosh" LP

Are you into crazed grind/deathcore with lightening fast drumming and a heavy edge of metal guitar licks? How about ridiculous lyrics to songs like "Bowelthrasher" and "Coffinfucker." If you said yes to these questions then this is a must have for you. Oh those crazy Swedes. (RC)
(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, Box 7092, 200 42 Malmo, SWEDEN)

BLACK CROSS – "Art Offensive" LP

BLACK CROSS has members from ENDPOINT, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, but do a different kind of thing than either of those bands. There is a lot of range on this LP, all sorts of influence from metal, punk, hardcore, and whatever else. For the most part I think it sounds like TORCHES TO ROME, but it is less straightforward than that. The rhythms are mixed up a lot more. There is a real rock and roll feel to it, too, like MURDER CITY DEVILS or BLACK FLAG. Lyrics are cool, nothing too cliché. You can tell these guys have been doing hardcore for a long time. This version is a really cool looking LP with a screened cover, limited to 2000. (WR)
(Initial, PO Box 17131, Louisville, KY 40217, www.initialrecords.com)

BLACK FRIDAY '29 – "Blackout" CD

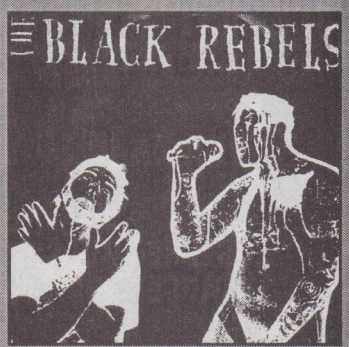
This is the CD version of the their 7" with six additional demo songs. Well-executed RIGHT BRIGADE-influenced hardcore from GERMANY. This is good, but nothing really reaches out and grabs me by the balls. This also contains a quicktime movie of them playing live. (CC)
(Crucial Response, Kaiserfeld 98, 46047 Oberhausen, GERMANY)

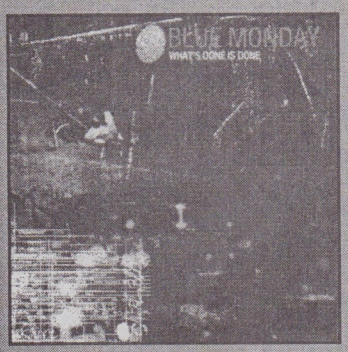
THE BLACK REBELS / THE NEARLY DEADS – split EP

I wasn't really feeling anything for this until the very last song the NEARLY DEADS' "I Spent My $$ On Rock 'n' Roll." Then I let out a small laugh. So I listened to the song a couple of more times. The lyrics are funny and the blend of the really deep sounding male voice with the really high sounding female voice is great. The music is trashy rock and just kind of sits in the background emphasizing the fun vocals. Now the whole record seems all right. Even the BLACK REBELS songs, one of which is an anthem about having AIDS. The singer's a bit too whiny for me, but the music is straight out the 70s punk rock handbook. (CK)
(Johnny Cat, PO Box 61, Estacada, OR 97023)

THE BLACKS – "Black Snake" EP

Four tracks from this Eurotrash combo, a time capsule from the prime years of 1997 and '99. Of all the bands with the same name (and there were several) these BLACKS were my favorites: they plied that kind of hip no-fidelity blues made ever-so-popular by the likes of the OBLIVIANS and REATARDS (and the JOHN SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION, I must add). A trumpet blast from the past, as it were. (JH)
(Zaxxon Virile Action, www.zaxxonvirileaction.com)





BLEEDING KANSAS – "F Squared" EP

Throwing around historical references the way gorillas throw around shit at the zoo, BLEEDING KANSAS couldn't piss themselves to save their lives face to face with the flames of the mighty John Brown. Although I think BLEEDING KANSAS seriously lack the backbone that their name implies, they really do stand out from the trash heap they're calling emo-hardcore these days. Three songs of heavily SWIZ influenced, mid paced emotional hardcore that has a thick, sludgy feel to it w/ some really rad discordant guitar parts. It grew on me fast. (VH)
(Coldbringer, PO Box 65144, Los Angeles, CA 90065)

BLISTERHEAD – "Punk Royale" CD

Young Swedish street punk influenced very much by RANCID and BOMBSHELL ROCKS. While it's not bad they lack originality and an identity of their own. Its fun and well done…it's just that's it's been done before and in fact is currently being done to death. (AD)
(KOB, via Cantarane 63/C, 1 – 37129 Verona, ITALY)

BLOWN TO BITS – "Fuck American Xenophobia" EP

I wasn't very impressed with these SF boys live, but I must have caught them on a bad night. This rips very well. A pinch of modern duh-beat, with a little bit of NAUSEA and LOGICAL NONSENSE (latter years). Jim's singing is creepy like a haunted house and gives what might have been a typical just okay record an unusual, spine tingling punk/metal greatness. Also, Jim no longer sings for these guys so buy this record or you'll never hear this again! (JA)
(Battlkey, PO Box 381224, Clinton TWP, MD 48038

BLUE MONDAY – "What's Done is Done" CD

This is some really good modern youth crew. If you liked their *War Wounds* 7" (which is also included on this CD), then you will definitely not be disappointed by these new songs. The CARRY ON influence is still here, but now I am hearing a little TERROR as well. I can always do without the double bass, but that's more of a personal criticism than a drawback (at least it's done tastefully). There is no doubt that BLUE MONDAY's song-writing has improved, but I find myself liking the raw production on their first record better. But that doesn't keep this from being a great release. (CC)
(Stab and Kill PO Box 52084, Boston MA 02205)

BOπR – "Living Tomorrow" EP

Wild bare-bones punk rock from Japan with screaming female vocals. Super noisy songs about affection, mother earth, and living for tomorrow. This is one occasion where I would definitely rather see this live than listen to the vinyl. (SR)
(103 Misato-Haitsu, 1-1 Tsughimoto-gho, Uzumusa, Ukyo-ku, Kyoto, 616-8147, JAPAN; masatora@ezweb.ne.jp)

BRAMBILLA – "Little Terror Creek" LP

Kick ass melodic German political punk sung that would fit in nicely next to the MANIFESTO JUKE-BOX and PETROGRAD (minus the hippy idealism) in your collection. Now while the music here on this LP is top notch, it is the lyrics (sung in both German and English) that really stand out. For BRAMBILLA not only brings in some scathing commentary on society, but also the scene as well. Highly recommended. (JF)
(Flight 13, www.flight13.com)

BRIGHT CALM BLUE – "A Direct Approach…" LP

I can't keep it out of my head to hold it against this band that they're from the same state as the FAINT, that's probably because of an undeniable similarity between the two. BRIGHT CALM BLUE play well crafted pop songs that are alarmingly un-offensive for how full of energy they are. It's nauseating. The first song on the album is about the ocean, leading me to further question the legitimacy of the band. You're from the midwest! *Give me a fucking break*! I know for a fact that there are beautiful lakes in Nebraska. As a radio rock album, great. The harmonies, melodies, layers, guitar leads, will make a perfect backdrop for 16-year-old kids to lose their virginity too. I just want to fucking puke. (VH)
(Level Plane, PO Box 4329, Philadelphia, PA 19118, www.lever-plane.com)

BUILT UPON FRUSTRATION – "Resurrected" CD

Knock! Knock! Who's there? The worst band I've ever heard—BUILT UPON FRUSTRATION. Insecurity about the size of their cocks has driven them to play the most absurdly macho, testosterone fueled PANT ERA worship I've ever heard. Awful. (VH)
(Da'Core, 44077 Bowes Ave., West Mifflin, PA 15122)

BÜMBKLAATT – "Ciegos" CD

Dark, intense, Portland/Scandinavian styled crust domination as filtered through the border walls and fences standing between San Diego, CA, USA and Tijuana, Mexico. Galloping speed, vocals in both English and Spanish – sung by a yeller and a low throat shredder – and a thick wall of avalanche-influenced guitars. CD also includes their debut 7". You will worship the fury! (WM)
(Slaves To Darkness, PO Box 34695, San Diego, CA 92163)

BURY THE LIVING – "Twitch of the Death Nerve" CD

BURY THE LIVING punch their way through some brute force hardcore that is packed full of crazed speed and aggression. No need for fancy metal licks or breakdowns here. This is straight-up old-fashioned hardcore with most of the songs clocking in at less than a minute. Extra points for the song title of the month, which is "Your Colors May Not Run But I'll Bet They Fucking Burn." If you have not heard this band before, then this discography CD would be an excellent place to start. (RC)
(Kangaroo, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, THE NETHERLANDS, tyson@xs4all.nl)

C.D. TRUTH – "Chemically Dependent" CD

Kind of an odd mix here. I hear at the very base of this, early BLACK FLAG, MOTOR HEAD, and RAMONES. But it's also kind of goofy sounding. Really distinctive vocals, which sound more, like something Seattle in the early 1990s would produce. This is all over the place, but well executed. Layout is pretty bad, but there

are some funny pictures of them on a motorcycle and in white jumpsuits. (WR)
(Foot In Mouth, 610 Philip Ave., Akron, OH 44305, www.cdtruth.com)

CALVARY – "The Will of the Way" EP

CALVARY, from Chicago, produced one of my favorite LP's of the past few years, the criminally under appreciated *Outnumbered is Outflanked*. This first song of this EP continues along the same lines as their LP, but the two other songs are each trying something different. On one song there's a MINUTEMEN vibe going with minimal guitars and lots of bass, and I think I hear a phaser pedal. One song is almost like a PAVEMENT or JETS TO BRAZIL song. It still owes a ton to late-80s DC, with the whole RITES OF SPRING/ONE LAST WISH thing going on, but at the same time they are trying to write completely different kinds of songs, which is awesome! I should mention, CALVARY now features Ebro (MK ULTRA, CRUDOS, CHARLES BRONSON, etc.) on drums, probably struggling to play at such a tempo. A great band that I think everyone should check out. (WR)
(Council, PO Box 220691, Chicago, IL 60622)

CAPITAL DEATH – "Throw Reality Out the Window" EP

Straightforward, no-frills, thrashing hardcore. Fast and to the point with no time to waste, grab yr skate, *Let's go!*! Their thrashier parts—thrashier than their normal thrash—bring to mind the style of intensity so well represented by the Japanese thrash style. Think a slightly slower S.O.B. or NINE SHOCKS TERROR little brother. Good show, well played. (WM)
(Matthew Carroll, 12 Frankin Dr., Truro, Nova Scotia, B2N 5A9, CANADA, slothcore@hotmail.com)

CAREER SUICIDE – "Reach for the Stars with..." EP

Toronto's CAREER SUICIDE's second EP combines the thick, fast punk charge of CHRIST ON A CRUTCH with a wry, sarcastic edge that's shown to best advantage on "Quarantined," a response to the paranoia around the SARS epidemic. But the remaining three tracks on the flip are equally powerful and even faster, with clear, no-nonsense production, rounding out a very strong EP. Recommended. (SS)
(marfar@telus.net)

CHANGES – "Alone" .CD

It is not everyday I get to review a hardcore CD from Russia, so I was excited from the get-go. CHANGES break things down with a charge of old school youth crew style hardcore. All the songs have lots of catchy melody and a great level of energetic passion. None of the lyrics are in English, so I don't have a clue what they are screaming about. But I enjoyed this and would like to hear more hardcore and punk releases from Russia. (RC)
(Old Skool Kids, PO Box 64, 109147, Moscow, RUSSIA)

CHEATS – "Cheap Pills" CD

Oh, neat, more thick necked drunk punk. I'm sure TKO would love to take these guys out for drinks and bottle breaking. Dime a dozen street punk 77 throw back shit with all the posturing you've come to expect. (BM)
(Da' Core, 4407 Bowes Ave, West Mifflin, PA 15122, www.da-core.com)

CINDER / 33AT45 – "De Tua Agua No Beberei" split 10"

Before I even put this record on the turntable, I pretty much knew what I was in for. The artwork and photos are dripping with LIFES HALT worship. Where do I even start? The cover has a drawing of a hardcore kid doing hand plants on a car (like the first LIFES HALT record), the Hollow Victory Records logo on the back is lifted straight from the cover of that same LIFES HALT record, and I think I counted three different LIFES HALT t-shirts on the band members alone. I could list more, but I think you get the point. After listening to both sides, I am going to have to say that CINDER definitely do an incredible job at copying the LIFES HALT sound. At times it's almost too good. Everything from the topics in their lyrics, to their breakdowns, to their strikingly similar melodic instrumental that starts their side of the record, CINDER makes no attempt to hide it. Not bad, but I'd rather have the original. 33AT45 aren't nearly as guilty; as they definitely have an angrier, slightly more modern hardcore sound that's accompanied by a well-done cover of SSD's "Boiling Point". (CC)
(Hollow Victory, Merce Rodoreda, n 19 28850, Torrejon de Ardoz, Madrid, SPAIN)

CLEARING AUTUMN SKIES – "Pulses & Matter" CD

Hailing from the glorious South Bay Metropolitan Area of San Jose, CA, CLEARING AUTUMN SKIES lay down thudding thick, discordant metalcore; brutal in delivery, dark in nature. Four songs, twenty minutes of power, chuggas, and intense throat-shredded vocals. Fans of CONVERGE to HATEBREED would find reason to mosh in these tunes. (WM)
(State of Grace, PO Box 8345, Berkeley, CA 947007, www.stateofgracehc.com)

CLIT 45 – "Kids Aren't Alright" EP

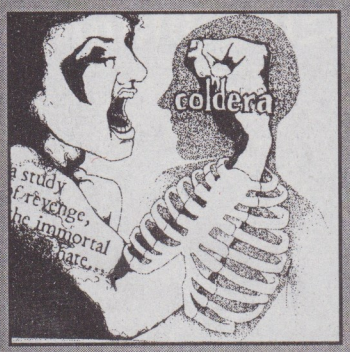
Wow, this EP is ripping. I've been totally into my UK '82-style bands these days and these are one of the best I've heard. Sounding a lot like Holland's ANTIDOTE they take the sound of bands like ONE WAY SYSTEM and the like, beef it up and inject some real anthemic song writing. The title track is the real winner, but the whole record is great. Fans of UNSEEN, KRAYS and VIRUS take note. (TB)
Ghetto Blast, 16703 Westgate Ave, Cerritos, CA 90703)

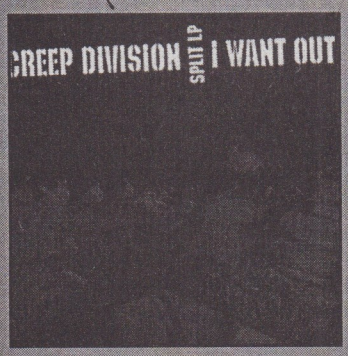
COLDERA – "A Valentine Oath Vendetta" EP

I have no idea where this band is from, but I can tell you this. COLDERA crank through five songs of straightforward punk that is spilling out at the seams with passion and anger. Hoarse vocals and aggressive rhythms take charge reminding me of a very Bay Area sound similar to bands like OJO ROJO (RC)
(coldera@hushmail.com)

COUNTDOWN TO LIFE – "Tragedy is so Irresistible" CD

Excruciatingly clean guitars playing obnoxious leads that have as much to do with hardcore and punk as a Mountain Dew commercial. Thirteen tracks of angst-fueled radio rock. Completely over produced, played with no enthusiasm, and absolutely disgusting. (VH)
(State of Grace, PO Box 8345, Berkeley, CA 94707)





CREEP DIVISION / I WANT OUT – split CD

A good split CD here. CREEP DIVISION, comprised of members of SICK OF IT ALL/STRAIGHT AHEAD, GOOD RIDDANCE, and FURY 66 plays some really good, fresh sounding hardcore, which is on the old school side of things, but doesn't just sound like a rehashing of what has already been done. I hear elements of bands from MINOR THREAT and STRAIGHT AHEAD to YOUTH OF TODAY to 7 SECONDS. I WANT OUT, with members of GOOD RIDDANCE and NO USE FOR A NAME remind me more of DAG NASTY, or the DAG NASTY-influenced SCREW 32. They also have melodic elements, which remind me of ALL. Both bands are really worth checking out, especially if you like hardcore but need a break from the tidal wave of AMERICAN NIGHTMARE clones and bad honky sXe bands. Layout is fine, but a little too graphic-design-y for my taste. (WR)
(Lorelei, PO Box 902, Santa Cruz, CA 95061, www.loreleirecords.com)

CRESTFALLEN – CD

Screaming and howling guitars and vocals; twisted, dragging chords; distortion noise galore; a fucking chaotic rage of crush and overwhelm, thrash and burn hardcore; a wall of rushing fury. Art-noise-core-violence for the new age. This is knocking me out of my socks, their intensity and use of power. Seriously, this is pretty damn kick ass, impressing me through all the reviews I've done today. Check the straight-on covers of MINOR THREAT ("Minor Threat") and the CRAMPS ("Human Fly"). Fans from *Jane Doe*-era CONVERGE to ORCHID, PG99 to COMBAT WOUNDED VETERAN, would be appreciative of CRESTFALLEN. (WM)
(Robotic Empire, PO Box 4211, Richmond, VA 23220, www.roboticempire.com)

CRIATURA – "Gente Sin Fabricas" LP

I wish I could think of a good comparison for this record, but it is really tough. What I can tell you is that it is really fucking good. CRIATURA plays punk rock that is really melodic, but with all sorts of cool stuff going on. First of all there are male and female vocals that constantly switch off in a way that is really great. Then there are these great melodic but quirky guitar leads, like something DRIVE LIKE JEHU or Mike Kirsch (BREAD AND CIRCUITS, TORCHES TO ROME, etc.) might be responsible for. Overall on top of the melody, there are elements of this that remind me of many Ebullition releases. It has a very cool-looking, very European record cover. I can't imagine how good this band will be on their next release. (WR)
(Malaraza, Apdo, 6037 50080, Zaragoza, SPAIN, www.malaraza.org)

CRIKEY CREW / GRUESOME – "Don't Screw Up Your Eyes" split EP

CRIKEY CREW play mid-paced moderately metallic Oi! that just never quite hits its stride. I don't really recall their other recordings being this plodding and boring. On the flip, we have GRUESOME, who crank out a pretty solid tune that reminds me a bit of early BALZAC. Quick paced sing-a-long street punk with riot vocals, with a slight *Earth AD*-era MISFITS influence. Definitely the better side of the split. (MT)
(Bronze Fist, 5-2-104, Higashi Toyonaka, Toyonaka City, Osaka, JAPAN)

D.S.B – "No Fight No Get" EP

Fuck yeah! I have nothing but good memories of D.S.B.'s quick visit to the West Coast. And yes it is true that they are coming back in November to hit up the East Coast. So it seems only fitting that Deranged would reissue their first EP that originally came out back in 1996. You know the drill. Killer, fist-pumping Japanese punk that charges unbelievably hard till the very last note is struck. Adrenaline building intros, pounding drums, buzzing guitars, howling vocals… it is giving me goose bumps just sitting here listening to it. A fucking classic for sure! (RC)
(Deranged, PO Box 543 Stn. P Toronto, Ontario M5S-2T1 CANADA)

DANSE MACABRE – "Die Kritik Ist Keine Leidenschaft Des Kopfes…" EP

Well-thought out and executed dark-edged hardcore from Germany. The bass is a heavy throb of darkness, setting an anchor for the two guitars to call and response, interweaving leads and verses. Plenty of clean finger chording positioned next to heavily distorted lead picking gives them a dynamic edge/impact, that this style of music (hardcore) on normal is missing and could learn to utilize more of (all at once is great but not all the time). The harsh screaming vocals are thankfully kept more towards the background in the mix. The packaging is nice, with loads of inserts and a glued color photo of the band on the inside. Hand numbered DIY core! (WM)
(React With Protest c/o Lars + Sabine, Vechtestr. 09, 33775 Versmold, GERMANY)

DEATHxDEATH – "The Glamour of Evil" – CD

Ten studio tracks and three live tracks (recorded at the now defunct Burnt Ramen space) from this Bay Area foursome. This one is all over the place, chugga chugga guitar sound that at times makes them almost sound dare I say it, new metal. There is also some pop punk like break parts in many of the songs. Some atmospherics creep in between some of the tracks. The vocals are screechy hardcore like at times with occasional MISFITS like "whoa whoa"chorus and lots of backing vocals. The lyrics are bleak with a bit of gothitude (or maybe that's just Steev's thank you list). I played this for a co-worker who said "Not quite AFI, not quite Ozzfest" I really can't top that description. Has bonus video for one track "Despair" that I could not access, I'm sure it's a scream. (RR)
(www.deathXdeath.com)

DEROZER – "Chiusi Denitro" CD

12 tracks of speedy, straightforward pop-punk, along the lines of SCREECHING WEASEL when they were *Wigglin*, or NOFX when they were "Liza 'n' Louise'n." Not as good as those masterpieces of course, but then again, it can't be easy being Italian. And they sound good enough. (RK)
(Mad Butcher, www.madbutcher.de)

DESPERATE CRY – "Theantsaremyfriends" CD

This long-running Austrian unit kick out some serious distortion drenched punk rock tinged hardcore on this, I believe to be, their second full-length release. Simple and to the point hardcore played with conviction and energy, what more do you need. Every now and then the singer, in a very *very* off way, reminds me of a much less whiny Jack Brewer from SACCHARINE TRUST if he were singing in a late 80s/early 90s DC/Dischord Records band. Lyrics are in German so I have no idea what he's yelling about. This band is definitely worth a lot of people's time. Great energy, good recording, quality tunes. On a side note: this is one of two seemingly unrelated CDs that I have to review this month that prominently feature ants on the cover. (WM)
(Interstellar, www.gatetohell.net)

THE DIRTY BURDS – "Dirty Shame" EP

Female garage rock band from England. Poppy, catchy tunes from the HEADCOATS school. Fun stuff. (CK)

(Damaged Goods, PO Box 671, London E17 6NF, ENGLAND, burds@vat69.demon.co.uk)

DIR YASSIN – "God Forgotten Place" EP

After absorbing so many stale phrases and decontextualized images of war and suffering in punk rock, writing, and art, I'm always grateful to a band or a zine writer who is brave enough to speak out of their own context—especially when it's one of real war and suffering. DIR YASSIN has relocated from Israel to Europe—something I hear a lot of Israeli punks do, for what seem to be obvious reasons. This is DIR YASSIN's second EP in three years. Its 14 songs are fast, obviously, but not blurry—bleak, outraged political hardcore with the spirit of SEEIN RED or ACTIVE MINDS. I really appreciated the 20 pages of liner notes, which contain, besides the lyrics in Hebrew and English, political and personal writing. Heartfelt but analytical, the unnamed writer cuts through shadow and theory, examining his experience growing up in Israel and his search for an alternative ethical community in the punk scene, his (our) responsibility to condemn racism and support the liberation of all people, including the Palestinians, and his difficult role challenging the misconceptions of leftists in Europe. He (?) discusses his own sense of exile in the same controlled tone, but the pain of loss comes through. Perhaps this typo says it best: "I can relate to it better, and even see how it has strengthened me—what doesn't kill you makes you stranger." (AC)

(La Vida Es Un Mus, BM Active WC1N, 3XX London, UK, freaks@lavidaesunmus.free-online.co.uk)

DISCARGA – "Que Venha Abaixo" EP

Most are probably familiar with these Brazilian thrashers via their recent LP and 10" courtesy of 625, and to fans of those records this new EP certainly no let down. What separates this from so many others who are just blasting away is that they never quite go into full-bore blender speed, and seem to take the time to actually construct songs, instead of relying purely on velocity to get the job done. DISCARGA whip through seven tracks of jackhammer speed hardcore (including a SEPTIC DEATH cover) with so many hook-laden sing-a-long parts that you wish you understood Portuguese. Those hooks make all the difference. (MT)

(Peculio, caixa postal 393, Santos – SP, CEP 11001-970, BRAZIL, www. Peculuidiscos.com.br)

THE DISHES – "3" CD

Bluesy all girl punk that sounds like it could be on Estrus or Kill Rock Stars. Why I give instant points to anything that has the Tim Kerr name attached to it (he produces) I immediately take away for an eight-minute song. (JF)

(File Thirteen, PO Box 804868, Chicago, IL 60680)

DISTRACTION – "Autodestruct" EP

Holly shit this is good. Twangy, poppy new new wave. It's like the BRIEFS if they were all wussed out on wuss pills. I don't even know what I'm talking about anymore. This is killer. I love this. Red vinyl. Cool looking cover. It took me two full minutes of listening to figure out if the singer was a guy or a girl. Keyboards accent the songs not over power them. This rules. Highest possible recommendation. I want a copy. Now. Get this and prepare to rock the fuck out. (BM)

(Radio Blast, Hildegardstr. 13, 44809 Bochum, GERMANY)

DITCH RAYMOND – "The Twenty Years War Against Conformists, Professors, and Trains" CD

A band from the suburbs of the East Bay, which I hadn't heard off. They play fast melodic punk rock. Reminds me of *Very Proud of Ya*-era AFI, mixed with BAD RELIGION, and the OFFSPRING, before they embraced their inner INSANE CLOWN POSSE, and something like PROPAGANDHI. Your basic high school punk rock band, made better by the fact that they are trying, in each song, to address issues in an intelligent way. Really cool cover art on this thing… a really well done painting of a Civil War battle scene except one of the soldiers looks like Fat Mike, and his horse has a mohawk. It's the best you can expect from Christian punk, and I mean that sincerely. (WR)

(Shove-It, PO Box 578609, Modesto, CA 95357, www.shoveitrecords.com)

DON AUSTIN – "Akron" EP

Ohio's DON AUSTIN play fast, determined, pissed hardcore. These guys run the gamut, from chaotic to melodic, but don't get carried away trying to reinvent the wheel. Eight tracks of simple, angry, energetic HC that simply kicks ass. Worth checking out. (VH)

(Rubber City, PO Box 8349, Akron, OH 44320)

DUDMAN / TERRIBLE HEADACHE – split CD

Shit! These are some seriously noisy ass tunes from Japan. DUDMAN comes blazing out of the gates creating one hell of blown out racket. Eight songs of wild-eyed speedcore with sharp choppy vocals and pummeling drum work. TERRIBLE HEADACHE on the other hand turns in some quality crustcore. Sped up and furious, similar to bands like STATE OF FEAR. (RC)

(F.A.R., c/o Yusuke Adachi, 1-9-39, Shimizugaoka, Fuchu, Tokyo 183-0015 JAPAN; adachifar@ezweb.ne.jp)

THE DUDOOS – "Kogidaso! Shura-Shu-Shun!" CD

A band new to me. This is I believe the second LP from this Japanese band. Not your typical Sound Pollution band, this is fun punk with keyboards and happy songs. Vocals in Japanese, this has a TOY DOLLS fun quality. Good catchy stuff. (RL)

(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017, dudoos@104.net)

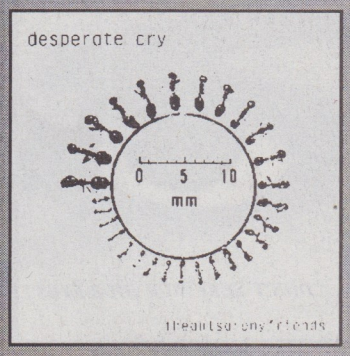
DYNASTY – CD

This is not punk. This is bad indie new wave. If you like this please do not talk to me. (JF)

(Tigerbeat6, www.tigerbeat6.com)

EARTH TODAY / POSITIVE BASTARDS – split EP

Finland's EARTH TODAY came roaring through the speakers via the needle to vinyl connection like a goddamned locomotive! Holy shit! Burly-ass wall of Scandi-crust attack in the vein of a faster DOOM with both low and



high vocals. Fuckin' hell!! All Hail EARTH TODAY!! The flipside brings Finnish crust-terror-unit POSITIVE BASTARDS to life with nine tunes of mincing crust-grind. Brutal is a good word but the thin recording makes them stand second to the intense EARTH TODAY side. This is a collective release between four Finnish labels. (WM)
(Hostile Regression, P.O. Box 37, 55801 Imatra, FINLAND, http://go.to/hrr)

EASTSIDE SUICIDES – CD

The EASTSIDE SUICIDES start off with a deliberate swagger, David Johansen wobbling down a litter-strewn fashion runway in six-inch pumps. Rather than knock your block off with hyperactive speed-noise they take a mid-tempo approach, emphasizing good-timey rock 'n' roll with sleazy sentiments. Spilled drinks, broken strings, and gobs of spit flying from the stage. "Panic in my Pants" leaves naught to the imagination, but is a well-chosen start for their CD (can't call in an "album" any more). It's New York style chug, complete with warped Johnny Thunders leads and lost-in-the-big-city lyrical concerns. "Don't Kiss Me, I'll Kill You," they say. Maybe they could inject a little more urgency into the tempo here and there but they're on the right track(mark). Fun noise without the socially-redeeming content. (JH)
(Super Secret, PO Box 1585, Austin, TX 78767, www.supersecretrecords.com)

EMBRACE TODAY – "Soldiers" LP

EMBRACE TODAY play brutal, unrelenting straight edge hardcore with a capital "S" and "E" as opposed to a capital "A" and "N", which was my main problem with their last record. Don't get me wrong, the AMERICAN NIGHTMARE influence is still there, but they definitely have grown into their own with this release. EMBRACE TODAY have the sound and production that you have come to expect from Deathwish Inc. This band is without a doubt one the better bands playing this style of hardcore. (CC)
(Deathwish Inc. www.deathwishinc.com)

THE ENABLERS – "Sweet Fuck All" CD

This band knows how to take me back in time. Strong punky rock with their mix of old Minneapolis music aka the REPLACEMENTS, SOUL ASYLYM, and HÜSKER DÜ and a touch of LEATHERFACE. A strange combo for a Brit band but I'm not complaining. Six songs that end much too quickly. (RL)
(Newest Industry, Unit 100, 61 Wellfield Road, Cardiff, CF24 3DG, UNITED KINGDOM, www.thenewestindustry.com)

ENVY – "A Dead Sinking Story" 2xLP

ENVY, from Japan, play metal hardcore with tons of dynamics. They go from really heavy to quiet in a second, and it's executed perfectly. They remind me a lot of MAJORITY RULE. They also recall the melodic heaviness of TRAGEDY, although this band does not play straightforward hardcore in the way that TRAGEDY does. Really fucking impressive drumming and poetic lyrics, lots of spacey instrumental parts. The record is well recorded, well executed, not too overproduced. Nice simple layout, which suits the record fine. And two fucking LPs of material. My god. My friends are crazy about this band. If they ever make it to the states, I think they will be a sight to see. (WR)
(Level Plane, PO Box 4329, Philadelphia, PA 19118, www.level-plane.com)

ERASE ERRATA – "At Crystal Palace" CD

This may be meant to be self titled although it does state the above title on the back. Although its really not recorded at Crystal Palace. So I'm guessing its just their new studio full length and is not live. Anyways, this all-girl band keeps the arty punk coming. Going back to early SLITS, RAINCOATS, and ESSENTIAL LOGIC mixed with the more recent Riot Grrl sound, these gals keep it social political and proud not to be pop. Strong stuff. (RL)
(Troubleman Unlimited, 16 Willow Street, Bayonne, NJ 07002, www.troublemanunlimited.com)

EVIL ARMY – "Conquer Human Life" EP

Fast raging punk tunes form Memphis, TN that mixes together one part crust, one part thrash and one part metal. Influences? Scandinavian crust? Old school American hardcore? Both? Oh yes, that's the ticket. (RC)
(Contaminated, PO Box 11953, Memphis, TN 38174; geocities.com/contaminatedrecords)

FACE FIRST – "Ignorant Assholes" EP

My favorite song is "Dirty Whore" although it's hard to escape the brilliance of "whoreiental (think 'oriental')." I was having a problem with believing women are humans, but this record cleared up a few things about those bitches. No. This is the most hateful record I have ever heard. These pigs should be shot and this label burned. (JA)
(Rat Town, PO Box 50803, Jax Beach, FL 32240)

FAGATRON – "Anthem" LP

Am I fucking dreaming? Nobody pinch me, cuz I don't want to wake up if I am. Yeah, ok, pinch me anyway. This rules!!!!! I heard "FAGATRON" and right away thought, "Aw fuck, more keyboards". I was wrong. They don't have keyboards; they don't even have a damn guitar. This is bratty, simplistic, punk rock. Sometimes like FLIPPER or the POP-O-PIES (ha!), sometimes like SCHLONG and sometimes like a shittier CIRCLE JERKS. Mike Thorn is going to have to change my diaper again, because I am wetting myself over this record. Darby Crash is dead, the DICKS are gone, there need to be more gay punk bands like this to fill the void. I am running this record home to Brontez ASAP. You better buy this, assholes. (JB)
(Agitprop, PO Box 748, Hanover, MA. 02339)

FAMOUS IN VEGAS – "Peace on Earth" CD

A low, heavy bass really drives this bluesy, attitude-riddled rock. These guys really work a groove while the singer belts out some snide shit. I'm a little confused why they only list seven of the ten songs. Who cares? This rocks! (HM)
(Broken Down Studio of Hate, 4228 Pine St 2nd floor, Philadelphia, PA 19104, www.famousinvegas.com)

THE FANTASTIC FIVE / THE MALCONTENTS – split EP

The FAN FIVE sneak in a little sixties guitar and tambourine into their first tune while they oscillate between pretty and heavy sounds. They stick with the heavy in the mid tempo rocker "American Wasteland". I almost hear a NEW YORK DOLLS thing happening with the FIVE. The MALCONTENTS rock a slow groove so well, I think the record's on the wrong speed. It all makes sense when they super-saturate the guitars on "The 15th" originally by WIRE. This is growing on me. (HM)
(Skull, 3770 Vinton Ave #23, Los Angeles, CA 90034,www.peppydoe.com)

FAR FROM BREAKING – "The Identity" EP

FAR FROM BREAKING does hardcore in the style of CHAIN OF STRENGTH and YOUTH OF TODAY or maybe IN MY EYES. The songs cover most of the basic themes that are acceptable within straight edge (for the time being) hardcore: "holding true", "the bonds we built", "looking inside" and a few "fuck you" songs. Lyrics vague enough that everybody can kind of relate, but still leave you feeling kind of empty. Personally, I sometimes wish I could get into this stuff because it's so high energy and positive, but for me it is so formula that it seems the antithesis of what I like about punk. However, if you are someone who loves straight edge hardcore, always, you will love this... I know the Bay Area Straight Edge (for the time being) kids love them. It is perfectly executed, with some great hooks. And you gotta give them some props for doing something remotely connected to punk in Texas. (WR)
(Youngblood, PO Box 236, Ephrata, PA 17522, www.youngblood-records.com)

LOS FASTIDIOS – "Ora Basta" CD

Hailing from Italy, LOS FASTIDIOS deliver super catchy street punk for all on this four song EP. Four solid songs about injustices and liberty will make all wish they new Italian so they could sing-a-long. This CD also includes two videos to play for you computer savvy punk rockers. I'd love to hear a full length. Very well received. (SR)
(KOB, Via Cantarene, 63/C, 1-37129, Verona, ITALY; www.kobrecords.com)

THE FAULTY – EP

Another band playing TEXAS IS THE REASON styled emo-rock. Unfortunately, this band plays a version like the later watered down TEXAS IS THE REASON LP. If you like that stuff you'll love this. But for me, I can't take it anymore. I need more guts—like SWIZ. SWIZ was emo, but they were great ...why don't bands try to play like them??? (AS)
(www.thefaulty.com)

LES FEMMES – "No I.D" CD

This band makes me want to drink cheap wine and make out. Rocking out like the MUFFS but with the ANNIVERSARY-type vocals. (MM)
(Dommage, 1 Rue De La Biscuiterie, 44000 Nantes, FRANCE)

FIG 4.0 / STAND – "Tarts and Vicars" split EP

FIG 4.0 kick this off with wild stop/start thrash with tons of parts and changes. Maybe like a slightly less jokey and very rockin' YOUR MOTHER. Flip it over, and STAND serve up a serious helping of metal. They also run the gauntlet from heavy to melodic and back again, but when they're heavy, they're crushing. There's a lot going on up Leeds way. This is ace all round. Nice packaging too. (AM)
(SuperFi, PO Box 8974, Birmingham, B17 8BA, UNITED KINGDOM; superfirecords@hotmail.com)

FIND HIM AND KILL HIM – "We Know" EP

Punk and Proud?? Too right!! Out of control pissed-off hardcore. This reminds me of a more angst ridden SELF DEFENSE or XFILESX—touches of the straight edge breakdowns and early Boston hardcore, but rough as fuck and totally punk. I dug this band's first effort and I'm still a fan. (TB)
(no address)

FIREAPPLE RED – "Born as Innocent" CD

Yeah, I liked AT THE DRIVE IN too. (MM)
(Good Clean Fun, 48 Cardigan Road, Havenfordwet, Pembrokeshire, SA 61 2QN, WALES)

FIRESTARTER – "Livin' on the Heat" LP

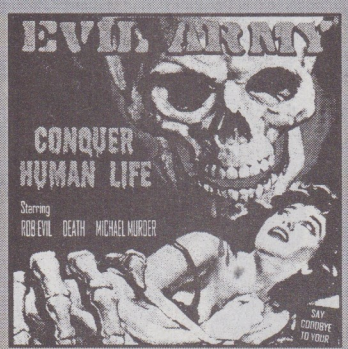
Well, here's the new FIRESTARTER LP, geez what a beautiful package, I think the sleeve is printed on absorptive titanium. It's weird how tough it's generally been to get any records by this post-TEENGENERATE combo, but everyone who's really interested has found a way to hear 'em. Their s/t record from two-odd years back is fantastic power-pop, and this new one continues their direction towards pure pop and away from the buzzsaw punk 'ghetto'. It's a pretty analogous process towards the type of sound that the REGISTRATORS are into now. I'll say that a rabid fan of TEENGENERATE would be totally turned off by most of this record, which seems to be an earnest attempt to recreate the feel of a lot of those UK LPs that skirted around the edges of the 70's punk/wave scene, like, I dunno, the SNIPS *Video King* LP. The tempos are very mid, the emphasis being on vocals and the production in general. There are a few faster songs on this one that cook "OK," but overall it's something of a letdown after that incredible first. (RW)
(Mangrove, ACP Bldg 3F, Koenji Minami 4-23-5, Suginami-Ku, Tokyo, 166-0003, JAPAN)

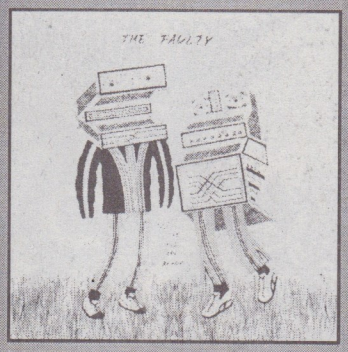
FIRST TIME – "You Can't Hurt Me" EP

When people talk about 70s KBD-sounding', there's two schools to go by. The bands that knew they were 'punk' and were imitating a whole bunch of recently purchased UK imports (which is fine, lots of great stuff boyo), and the other kind, the naïve gropings of the local dorks who had read about punk in *Rolling Stone* and were making up their own version. This aggregation is continuing that proud sonic tradition for the new century by releasing this crude, sloppy and entirely great garage-level punk 7". Yeah, yeah, it's 2003 and no one can be unaware anymore, but maybe I can advance the theory that the pure over load of punk info produces the same effect in the end. You still get great primiteevo-shit music like this. Gods! (RW)
(Johnny Cat)

FITTS – "I Have to Laugh" EP

Already like it, it's true. Deadly duo that includes LOST SOUNDS synth-ist Alicja, dishing out a wild and simple take on punk rock, minus the usual science fiction/doomed world window-dressing that I associate with that band…the FITTS spell the word "you" as "U", buzz with smouldering intensity, and turn out dirty sounds that enter the ear and burrow deep. Neat. The slapdash cut-and-paste cover and nobrow song titles ("Girls Like U) Deserve 2 Die", Contaminated (by Your D*!#@k)" belie a record that's a lot more complicated than you might think on first exposure. For fans of FITTS, LOST SOUNDS, and casual listeners alike. (JH)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 21095, www.bigneckrecords.com)





FLATLINERS – "Safe Side-Suicide" LP

Super fast street punk from San Antonio, Texas. Aggression filled songs with raspy and gruff vocals about individuality, war, and skateboarding. Pretty heavy on decent guitar solos. Not bad. Oh yeah—great colored vinyl! (SR)
(Slab-O-Wax, PO Box 461082, San Antonio, TX 78246)

FLIPTOPS / GLORYHOLES – split EP

FLIPTOPS play old school, mid-tempo, catchy and melodic punk rock. I think I don't like their name, as I'm always a bit skeptical when I put one of their records on. It's good stuff. I don't know that it's great stuff, but it is definitely good stuff. I wonder if I would like it better if somebody told me that it was a new STITCHES or BRIEFS record. GLORYHOLES play a very similar style of music and are pretty comparable in terms of quality. It's good stuff, but I think lacks that certain *je ne sais quoi* that would separate it from the masses. Two songs by each band and all four are worthwhile. It's punk, it's rock and it's punk rock. It might even make my Top 10. (KK)
(Johnny Cat)

FRACAS – "On Trial" CD

I wasn't really certain what to expect from this Alameda band fronted by a man who once accidentally shot himself, then removed the bullet and sewed up the wound without any assistance, and I'm pleasantly surprised. Heavy SAMHAIN/later-era MISFITS influence on this 16 track CD, mixed with a bit of a pre-techno AFI. (MT)
(Cheetah's, PO Box 1112, Berkeley, CA 94704)

FRANTIC STUFFS – "Break Loose/Boring Town"

Solid punker 45 by a new band out of Japan. The songs sound a little half-finished, but they are coasting on pure desire and adrenalin, which really comes across despite slightly stiff production. A friend of mine looked at the sleeve photos and theorized that they were playing instruments provided by the studio, which would explain some of the hesitation. Lock these guys in a closet for about a month and they should pop out with a couple solid fucking punk records; just make 'em record in a Tokyo subway bathroom instead of that studio!? (RW)
(MFFM)

FUCK ON THE BEACH / MERDA – split EP

FUCK ON THE BEACH… you know the drill, Japanese fast-core from this crazy three-piece. Thrashing guitars, breathless screams, hammering drums… oh so sweet. MERDA (who are from Brazil) go down a similar path with seven songs of speed, noisy distortion and lots of samples. (RC)
(2+2=5. c/o Douglas Alves Jr., Caixa Postal 1668. Sao Paulo, SP-CEP 01059-970-BRAZIL, terror225.cjb.net)

GTC – "Columbus & His…" EP

A shocking assault of force and confidence that any variety of emo or post punk band I'd guess GTC to be, based on the sparse art-school layout of the sleeve, would never have. Discordant guitar and a trumpet… like CONSTANTINE SANKATHI without all of the crying on the floor stuff. From Chaotic to calm, GTC are heavy on the dynamics. It's fast when it needs to be, and they never get carried away with the artsy stuff. I'm impressed. (VH)
(no address)

GENUINE – "Bury the Hatchet" CD

Straight-edge moshcore from the Northwest. This one man youth crew band is a perfect example of the kind of recycled angst that is homogenizing, numbing, and destroying the hardcore "scene". Heartless music that's so calculated it might as well have been generated on his computer. "We wrote seven songs in one day, another seven a few days later…" It's insulting. Give me a fucking break... Belligerently throwing around catch phrases, replacing Budweiser with bullshit, GENUINE is positively making me nauseous. This 27 track CD is the complete GENUINE discography, and a complete waste of time. (VH)
(State of Grace, PO Box 8345, Berkeley, CA 94707)

GLASS CANDY – "Bicicleta Emocional" EP

I was prepared to hate this record because it looked so pretentious to me. Everything is written in Spanish even though this band is from fucking Olympia and their label is from the East Coast. One time I saw their singer rocking a unitard-looking thing with one strap. Strike Two. But, ok, I'm just a dick. The record is good. It *is* pretentious as hell, but it's new wave, for fuck's sake! It's supposed to be pretentious. The girl's vocals are awesome and remind me of that lady from BERLIN. On this disc, you will find a ROXY MUSIC cover and an original that kicks ass on their cover. I wish there was some sort of insert explaining things, where they come from, lyrics, maybe why they decided to put everything in Spanish. I'm even going to have to go look up the damn label address. (JB)
(Troubleman Unlimited, 16 Willow Street, Bayonne, NJ 07002, www.troublemanunlimited.com)

GUFF – "Engine Trouble" CD

I really would have paid good money to see Artie Philly's face when Greg at Go-Kart told him that he would have to peddle this piece of crap. Okay maybe I wouldn't find it an utter piece of regurgitated bullshit if I had just broke up with some girl, but I didn't. I have a feeling even if I did; this wouldn't be the type of crap that would make me feel any better. This is melodic, heartbroken shit that sounds like bad DOWN BY LAW. Perfect music to listen to while building floats for homecoming. (JF)
(Go-Kart, PO Box 20, Prince St. Station, NY, NY 10012)

GUNMOLL / ANNALISE – split EP

Two of the better bands around right now, ANNALISE are the best thing to come out of England since the 'TONE (smarty-pants amongst you will undoubtedly tell me that ANNALISE have been around longer than the 'TONE but I heard the 'TONE first, okay?) writing songs that will raise the hairs on your arm and make you remember the good old days. Like THE JAM meets J CHURCH meets PEGBOY. If you haven't heard them – write ANNALISE on your arm so you remember to buy something by them the next time you're in the record store. GUNMOLL keep getting better, if JAWBREAKER were from Gainesville circa now they might sound like this. The whole thing is beautifully packaged by (I was about to say No Idea, but it's actually…) Boss Tuneage, if you have a record player buy this, if you don't I'm sure it's on CD too. (AD)
(Boss Tuneage, PO Box 74, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2WB, UNITED KINGDOM)

HAVENOTS / SOVIETTES – split EP

The HAVENOTS serve up two Japanese power pop gems. Not bad, not as good as their LP on Repent (actually they don't sound anywhere as frantic and trashy as they used to). The SOVIETTES are causing quite a stir from what I hear. Let's take a listen. Hmmmm. Not bad, girl boy vocals. Catchy but not overly poppy. No one in this band can "sing" per se but they all manage to make glorious noise. This is frantic, catchy and I think I need to check this band's back cataglog out. (BM)
(Nice & Neat, PO Box 14177 Minneapolis, MN 55414, www.nice-neat.com)

THE HAVOC – "Our Rebellion Has Just Begun" LP

The day the spiky army are leading the charge for the overthrow of the evil empire is the day I change sides. Besides that, expect more confidently played leather and bristle punk rock from the label that seems to be specializing in all that worships Wattie and all other English bands us ex-pats took for granted. Slower than The UNSEEN, but way more hooks, taking in the more melodic sounds of The KRAYS whilst throwing in a few of the guitar licks one would expect to find on the first two STIFF LITTLE FINGERS long players. God is brought up in a favorable light in one song, which is either a yeah or a neah depending on your few of the divine light or corruptor of fragile minds. Personally, my dear, I don't give a damn. (SD)
(Punkcore, PO Box Middle Island, NY 11953, info@punkcore.com)

HE WHO CORRUPTS – "The Steps to Success" EP

Whoa! This LP fucking came out of left field and totally blew me into right field. This insanity comes from the Midwest and utilizes some ex-KUNG-FU RICK folks. As expected with that background, this is totally over the top grinding metal/hardcore. Stop-start tempo changes, blast beats, slow churning breakdowns, insane high pitched-throat shredding vocals… just an all around a blasting release. The hectic time changes and overall heaviness reminded me of ACRID a lot. Fucking sick! (RC)
(625 Trashcore, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142-3413, www.625thrash.com)

THE HILLSTREET STRANGLERS – "Bubble Bath Suicide" CD

The shrill vocals vaguely remind me of Jello Biafra, but the spew coming from the shrill is more like Ben Weasel's gibberish. These STRANGLERS actually hit on some personal issues and cover all sorts of pop-ish punk styles. Nothing really sets them apart, or really moves me, but a solid effort. (HM)
(E is for Evil, PO Box 6603, Oceanside, CA, 92052, www.eisforevil.org)

THE HINT – CD

A good rockin' pop band here. I can't pinpoint their sound exactly because I hear a little current pop punk, a little mod, a little SMOKING POPES, and even a little HOUSEMARTINS. Maybe it's the variety, all good pop. Anyways, good for pop fans for sure. (RL)
(www.thehint.com)

HOLLYWOOD HATE/PSYCHOPUNCH – split EP

HOLLYWOOD HATE belts out some full-throttle punk rawk with a solid FLOWER LEPERDS cover. The Swedish PSYCHOPUNCH deliver a head-bobbin' wall of sound that rocks. An excellent split. (HM)
(Intensive Scare, PO Box 3105, Bellevue, WA 98009-3105)

THE HONOR SYSTEM –"Rise and Run" CD

Somebody has been studying his or her early to mid 90s emo punk handbook. A healthy does of FUGAZI, a dash of JAWBREAKER, and a touch of the whole Chapel Hill scene to round it all of. Yet HONOR SYSTEM actually is able to make it work in way that is quite good. In fact I had me an emo indie moment when I was done with this CD and played records I hadn't played in years. (JF)
(Grey Flight, PO Box 720595, San Jose, CA 95172)

I.R.D. – "Aldrig Köpt, Aldrig Såld " EP

Man! This is the side project of members of TOTALITÄR, MILLENCOLIN, and NINE. I thought that was pretty interesting, and it helps to make sense why this one 7" features two completely different kinds of sounds from side A to the flipside. Fuck! The A side on the record is amazing. This is a full, brutal, hardcore powerhouse attack that rocks so fucking hard from start to finish. Spine crushing, tough as fuck, guitar driven hardcore insanity. Tough, tough, tough! So fucking good! Ok, but then you get to the B-side, which takes you to a whole 'nother level. The opening track on the B-side slows down and takes on a poppier garage rockish hardcore/punk ballad. Musically the song is very good; I especially like the last 1/3 of the song when some seriously blazing bluesy guitar solos kick in. All the lyrics on the B-side are sung in English, but I think the Swedish lyrics on the A-side sound way tougher. Altogether an interesting EP, totally worth picking up. (LG)
(Combat Rock Industry, Hämeenpuisto 16 B 31, 33210 Tampere, FINLAND)

THE ICONOCLAST – "Domination of Destruction" EP

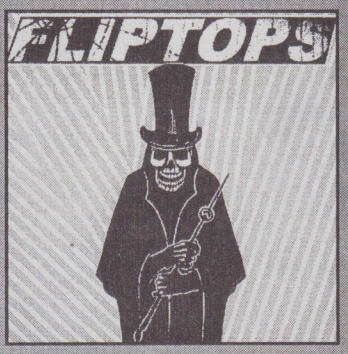
Originally released in 1985, this four-song EP is most notable for its political sensibility and a couple of urgent thrash tunes. "Domination" is a raging noise-fest, with waves of distortion rising from an incendiary tune that ends too quickly. While probably not one of the urgent classics, this reissue has more than enough honesty and commitment to compensate. (SS)
(no address)

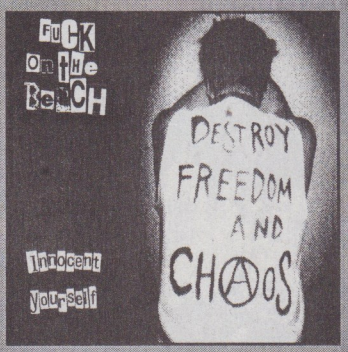
I DEFY – "The Firing Line" CD

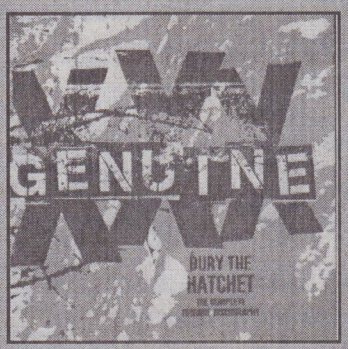
Woah! This comes out the fucking gates roaring! Thirteen tracks of high intensity, high energy hardcore that would find a home amongst the likes the Bridge Nine set for certain. In fact take PANIC and add Rob from BY THE GRACE OF GOD/ENDPOINT/BLACK CROSS on vocals and you got a good starting point for what I DEFY is doing; but more intense and more powerful. The surprise of the month for sure. Nice SLIME cover to finish off the album to boot. (MT)
(Reflections, Spoorwegstraat 117, 6828 AP Arnhem, THE NETHERLANDS)

I EXCUSE – "Burn the Empty to the Ash" CD

Oh I love LEATHERFACE and I love TOYS THAT KILL. I EXCUSE sound like a combination of the two mentioned bands, with a way bigger emphasize on the LEATHERFACE. Only problem is why I EXCUSE has







all the LEATHERFACE guitar points they can't pull off the vocals that make LEATHERFACE so great. Still this is quite a good release, and worth seeking out. (JF)
(Newest Industry, Unit 100, 61 Wellfield Rd, Cardiff, Cf24 3DG, UK, www.thenewestindustry.com)

I EXCUSE – "...Is Dead" CD

This band makes me feel the same way I did when my band mate first introduced me to DILLINGER FOUR, fucking amazed. This Tokyo-based band will blow your mind any day. (MM)
(Snuffy Smile, 4-1-16-201 Daita, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 155-0033, JAPAN)

INHUMAN – "The New Nightmare" CD

This NYHC band has been around since the mid-90s. I never really could get into their stuff, and this record is no exception. INHUMAN play aggressive hardcore that falls somewhere between the newer SICK OF IT ALL material and Epitaph-era H2O. It's not bad, but when it comes to NYHC, my tastes fall more towards *Victim in Pain* rather than *Riot, Riot, Upstart*. (CC)
(A-F, www.a-frecords.com)

INSTANT AGONY - "Not My Religion" EP

Another street punk goodness from Punkcore. These guys are from England, I think. However, unlike most of the bands going for the *Punk and Disorderly* sound, these guys genuinely got it. Perfect buzz guitar, understated choruses, strained screaming, simple beats and simple bass make for a great, listenable release. Still, I would prefer lyrics and information over photos of the punx. Punkcore, what's up with that? (JA)
(Punkcore, PO Box 916, Middle Island, NY 11953)

JASON / RADIKALKUR – split LP

Sixteen songs on one side of a LP is usually a good sign. JASON prove me wrong with sixteen torturous tracks of radio rock with fast parts. Imagine a Brazilian FAITH NO MORE with drummer who liked grind. The occasional melodic punky parts are cool, but they're buried deep. RADIKALKUR, from Austria, aren't as hard on the ears, if you can imagine mediocre rap metal as not being hard on the ears. (VH)
(Bloodshed666, Rehau 5, A-3340, Waidhofen, Ybbs, AUSTRIA)

JED WHITEY – "This Machine Kills Hippies" EP

This guitar noodling, power-driven, rock punk is full of hooks and low-fi goodness. These guys fall somewhere between ZEKE and GLUCIFER, but their low-fi mix gives the recording a live feel that triggers primitive responses deep within me. All of a sudden, I'm salivating over the thought of cheap beer.... This band is gonna drive me to drink! JED MOTHERFUCKIN' WHITEY! (HM)
(Busted Heads, Box 275, 901 06 Umea, SWEDEN, www.bustedheads.com)

THE JET CITY FIX – "Play to Kill" CD

Fuck man, if the word gets out on this band they won't be my little secret. I mean who can resist the pleasure of thinking that they know of a band that is going to be huge before everybody else. JET CITY FIX has it all, epic long drawn out riffs and CREED-like vocals. This has way more hit making potential then the 24-7 SPYZ record that I was playing before I threw on this fine piece of digital plastic. Fuck I am going to call Clear Channel and request this. To top it off they share a booking agency with the White Stripes. (JF)
(Infect, PO Box 1201, Tacoma, WA 98401)

JOLENES – "Rinse and Repeat" CD

The first song on this disc by the all girl JOLENES is about the joy of shampoo. Why I am all for a more hygienic punk scene, this is due more to the fact that I miss my top teeth, not because I love cleaning products. Having stated that I would like to say that this disc sounds more like a KIRBY GRIPS-lite then anything else. I hated the KIRBY GRIPS, and I do not care for this disc anymore then I did that one. (JF)
(Last Chance. PO Box 42396, Portland, OR 97242)

KAAOS – "Ristiinnaulittu Kaaos" LP

This is the re-release of KAAOS' awesome first LP. There's all the songs from the original recording, plus 3 extra. KAAOS blast out some seriously amazing Finnish hardcore. Their sound is comparable to their peers of the genre, other notable Finnish legends like RATTUS or RIISTETYT. Fast brutal songs with ripping guitar interjections and dynamic rhythms help to make this record unique and dimensional. Totally raw as fuck; this album is awesome and is a definite must have for any serious HC fan. This is a necessity. (LG)
(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408; www.havocrex.com)

KAAOS – "Totaalinen Kaaos" 12"

This record is simply amazing. It's the purest example of that simple yet highly refined blazing urgency that made early Finnish hardcore so brilliant. Played at such a hectic pace, it's as though at any moment everything just might completely fall apart yet they manage to hold it together—totally brilliant! The manic drumming, the raw-as-fuck guitars, and Jakke's intense vocal delivery are all just so fucking perfect. This twelve-inch compiles their tracks from the *Systeemi Ei Toimi* and *Russia Bombs Finland* compilations with their classic *Totaalinen Kaaos* EP. Essential. (MT)
(Hohnie, An Der Kuhtränke 7, 31535 Neustadt, GERMANY, www.hohnierecords.com)

KAMIKAZE – "Destroy Everything You Think You Know" LP

Fast, thrashy hardcore containing the drummer and bassist of DOWN IN FLAMES. Don't let that discourage you however, because this is better than anything DOWN IN FLAMES ever did. KAMIKAZE's song writing is more complex, and the vocalist's delivery style is a lot more entertaining. I was going to try and avoid any TEAR IT UP references (d'oh!), but they do at times remind me of them before the 70s rock influence bit their ass. I also hear various DC influences all the way from bands like YOUTH BRIGADE to a song like "HR" that totally reminds me of something Chris Thompson related (MONORCHID, CIRCUS LUPUS). I can dig. (CC)
(www.kamikazehardcore.com)

KEEN MONKEY WORK – "Maniac and Violence" EP

If you were wondering whether there were any bands in Japan proper that still played in the style of TEEN-

GENERATE, well, here ya go. Amazing, snotty, fast four-song punker with a totally direct-to-brain contact high effect. Let's see if they can keep it up for a few more records before they decide to 'mature' and start playing NIGHTINGALES or PASSIONS covers. (RW)
(Needle, Usui-House 2F, 3-22-8 Kouenji-Kata, Suginami-Ku, Tokyo 166-0002, JAPAN)

KENNER DER MATERIE – "Versetzungsgefahrdet" CD

There are a few things about this record that have left me really perplexed. True, I don't understand a like of German, so I don't really know what KENNER DER MATERIE is all about, but there's also these really confusing "easy listening" intros that seem really out of place next to the rest of the song that's DESCENDENTS sounding. Honestly, I want to know if they really brake out with the acoustic at the beginning of each song when they play live. Who knows…(MM)
(TLG, Ahornstrabe 11, 72218 Effringen, GERMANY)

KERUM – "Twilight of the Apocalypse" LP

Baltimore, Maryland's KERUM kick out 26 songs of gnarly raw mince-core styled crunchy thickness (vocals and guitars) meets a power-violence structuring. At times, I hear a more cohesive CROM meets AGATHOCLES, if you can picture that. Fast, distorted, and raw. High and low vox wax philosophically on subjects such as a "Sea of Hoodies," "Republicans In Love," "Generic Anti-Government Conspiracy Rambling," and "Giving Up is Easier Than Trying." The packaging came with a 32 page xerox book containing collages and lyrics, a bunch of stickers, flyers, and a patch. Nice green marbled vinyl, too. (WM)
(Torture Garden Picture Company, PO Box 1098, Bel Air, MD 21014)

THE KINISON – "The Kinison" CD

This reminds me of the BREAK/LET IT BURN record I reviewed last month. Hardcore mixed with noisy emo and rock 'n' roll with vocals alternating between being sung and screamed. Fans of the whole NATION OF ULYSSES/MAKE UP thing will probably dig it too, me? It's all right, it sounds like REFUSED here and there too. (AD)
(Fearless, 13772 Goldenwest St. #545, Westminster, CA 92683)

LADYKILLERS – "Heart Attack Machine" CD

Blazingly distorted guitars, and punchy drums highlight the LADYKILLERS' sound which kinda reminds me of early TOXIC REASONS or SOCIAL DISTORTION. Solid song writing and concise, rockin tunes make this a solid eleven song CD. Excellent. (HM)
(Galeforce, 1605 South Chapel Ave, Alhambra, CA 91801, www.ladykillersmusic.com)

LA PLEBE – "Conquista 21" CD

A pretty decent mix of sing along street punk and skate punk with horns with gruff English and Spanish vocals. I think the best way to describe them is as a Mexican DROPKICK MURPHYS with horns instead of bag pipes. Not my bag, but very good for what it is. (BM)
(www.laplebe.com info@laplebe.com)

LIFE IN PICTURES – "(None)" EP

Four songs of emo crust. Sounds like FROM ASHES RISE meets RIGHTS OF SPRING… or maybe VULGAR PIGEONS (when Spencer was singing) meets THE SHIVERING (get it?). Either way you look at it this is good stuff. If screamo is your bag, get this. (AS)
(Cold Bringer, PO Box 931174, Los Angeles, CA, 90093)

LIFE SENTENCE – "Life Sentence" LP

Great record, great name, great logo. From 1986, I loved this when it came out—it was just before hardcore went metal and went down the pooper (*yes*…it did.) Short sharp blasts of energetic punk rock played at breakneck speed. Perfect for running round and around in circles to. Now it's been re-released with a demo and a couple of live tracks stuck on. "Punks For Profit," fuck, if they only knew… Brilliant. (AD)
(Legends of Hardcore)

THE LEVELING – "War Fever" CD

I reviewed their demo a few months ago in my column and here we go with the new CD. I may be mistaken, but I am pretty sure this is the same thing as the demo. Anyway, in case you missed it the first time around, this ex-BROTHER INFERIOR band rips through 11 songs of short blasts of intense hardcore. Aggressive vocals spit out great political lyrics full of seething rage. This is a damn fine release from this Tulsa, OK band. (RC)
(Angry, Young and Poor, 140 N. Prince Street, Lancaster, PA 17603)

LOUISE CYPHRE – "Wenn Wir Menschen…" EP

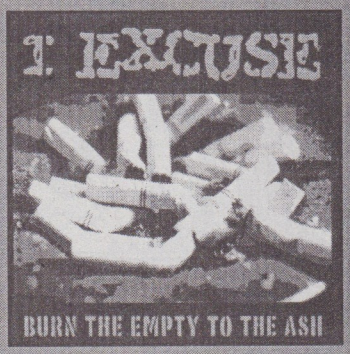
This band from Germany sounds a whole lot like ORCHID to me, especially the *Dance Tonight, Revolution Tomorrow* 10". A lot of quiet instrumental parts, too. Chaotic and sort of all over the place—I have no idea what they're singing about, since it's in German. Good stuff, though. Layout is a little cold, and boring, but what can be done? (WR)
(Fabian Frense, Düsbergstr. 14, 48336, Sassenberg, GERMANY)

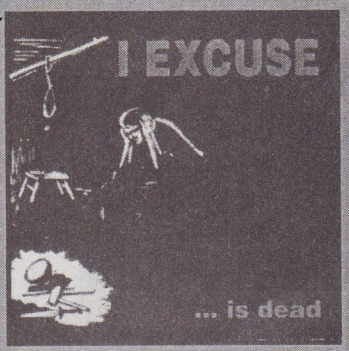
LONGBALL TO NO-ONE – "The Little Boy Who Picked Up a Rock…" CD

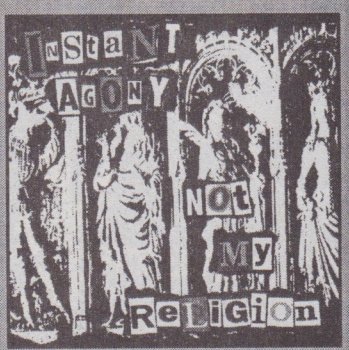
This is the first time I've heard this band, I've seen their name mentioned a few times. From Japan and on Snuffy Smile Records you can imagine to a certain degree what this is like - THE URCHIN, SCREAMING FATRAT, 8 ROOF, SPRAY PAINT and SNUFF. It's melodic yet spasmodic and in fact is a little more chaotic and noisy than any of the aforementioned bands, at times it's verges on emo territory. Not bad, just not my cup of tea. (AD)
(Snuffy Smile, 4-1-16-201 Daita, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 155-0033, JAPAN)

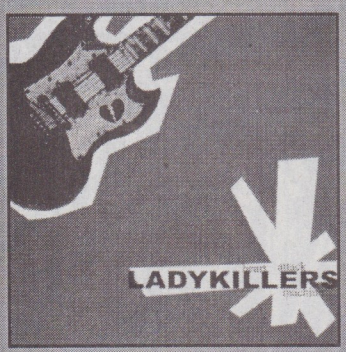
LOVE LIKE...ELECTROCUTION – CD

This release stands out among the pile of poop I got to review this month. Thanks fellas, I appreciate it. These Australians play hardcore in the vein of JR EWING, HEROIN, & RIGHTS OF SPRING. This CD has a really good feel to it; legitimacy—like these kids are actually passionate about what they're doing, and it shows. Really good stuff. To the youth of America, I ask: why do most of the good records come from over seas these days? (AS)
(www.buildrecords.com)









MC5 – " The American Ruse" 10"

Five tracks of pre-production rehearsal tapes from the *Back In The USA* album, which I cannot for the love of me see the point of, as for maybe the same price you can buy the fucking LP in question and have in your collection the final recorded versions of their songs, the way Mr. Rob Tyner and friends intended it to be. Track six has been lifted of the live CD *Power Trip*. For cuntieballicking record nerds only I'm afraid. (SD)
(Total Energy, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)

MG-15 – "Caos Final" EP

It can be said that those four lads from Stoke, know collectively as DISCHARGE, had more of an impact on punk rock than any other band that came before or since. In the wake of their initial bomb blast, a virtual tsunami of bands, who borrowed heavily from their master's example, was unleashed to wreak havoc upon the Earth. The tracks that make up this EP are from the demo of one of the premeire bands to have been spawned during this time frame—Spain's MG-15. Raw but thick as hell production with snarled barked vocals, a simple repetative pounding drum attack and those amazing buzzsaw guitars—you can feel the desperation of a world condemned for nuclear annihilation. Outstanding. (MT)
(La Vida Es Un Mus, BM Active WC1N, 3XX London, England, UNITED KINGDOM, freaks@lavidaesunmus.free-online.co.uk)

M.O.T.O. – "Kill M.O.T.O." CD

Back with a tuneful batch of punk and post punk songs. Not nearly as lo-fi as some of their earlier singles and such. This almost comes across as a comp with JOY DIVISION, MEKONS, and EDDIE & THE HOT RODS except it's all original. I never knew these guys could capture the old sound of Brit like this. A great full-length! (RL)
(Criminal, www.motorock.com)

MADELINE FERGUSON / BURY ME STANDING – split CD

MADELINE FERGUSON hands down a big chunk of screamo, with random tempo changes and some heavy riffage that was obviously influenced by classic 80s metal like IRON MAIDEN. Strained vocals, erratic pacing, a few mellow breaks; you know how it goes. BURY ME STANDING have a totally different style. They hammer their way through five tracks of thick and meaty metallic hardcore. Surging rhythms and lots of tempo changes combined with two vocalists making for a pretty solid effort. They definitely reminded me of BOTCH. (RC)
(Slave Union, Raymond St., Schenectady, NY 12308; slaveunion.com)

MALEFACTION – "Where There is Power..." CD

Canadians play fifteen tracks of heavy metal madness. They thank their guitar tech if that gives you any indication of the caliber of metal we're dealing with. Intelligent lyrics coming from the leftist political background that you'd expect from a band on G7. But too much brutality for my tastes. (VH)
(G7 Welcoming Committee, PO Box 27006, 360 Main Street Concourse, Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA R3C 4T3, www.g7welcomingcommittee.com)

MALIGNANT TUMOUR – "Dawn of the New Age" LP

This is totally insane grinding crust-core from The Netherlands. Fast and furious with an occasional blast beat or guitar solo thrown in for good measure. 26 songs with lyrics about war, nazis, big business, politics, environment…uh did I mention they hate Nazis? Oh yeah and an UNCURBED cover to boot. (RC)
(Malignant Tumor, Beeksestraat 76, 4841 GD Prinsenbeek, THE NETHERLANDS, malignanttumour.ht.st)

MANIFESTO JUKEBOX / I EXCUSE – split EP

MANIFESTO JUKEBOX keep up the Florida emoish stylings of their BYO release on this split EP. Yet while a lot of bands try to pull off this style with little success, Antti's voice is able to carry this above the average threshold. I EXCUSE meanwhile continue with their LEATHERFACE worship, with a touch of SNUFF thrown in. If you are familiar with my music loves you know that makes this a must grab. (JF)
(Combat Rock Industries, PO Box 65, Riihmaki, FINLAND, www.combatrockindustry.com)

ME FIRST & THE GIMMES GIMMES – "Ben/I'll Be There"

It used to be fun; punk bands would (usually at the end of their album) do a cover of a non-punk song and punk it all up. It didn't hurt no one and was good for compilation tapes. Then ME FIRST & THE GIMMES GIMMES came along and killed the joke. Thanks. (AD)
(Jade Tree, 2310 Kennwynn Rd, Wilmington, DE 19810)

MEINE KLEINE DEUTSCHE – "Krystal" EP

There's good fuzz guitar and a good screechy femme vox presence (dear) layered over computer beats on this 7", but the songs are little more than chants at this point. The hook lets yer hat hit the floor, ain't sharp enough yet. Reminds one of a more obscure-o Kill Rock Stars record from the late 90s, at least in intent. It's no cop to say that better things could come from them, the elements are all there waiting to explode. (RW)
(Big Brothel/Little Shop Of Horrors, www.bigbrothelrecords.cjp.net)

MELE MARCE – "XI Comandamento" CD

Pretty run-of-the-mill Italian street-punk band. They're certainly not bad, and appear to want unity between punks and skins, and to not like fascists at all, which is commendable enough. The highlight of the CD is definitely a cover of the 4SKINS "Evil," sung (as are all their songs) in Italian! (RK)
(Anfibio, www.anfibiorec.cjb.net)

MEXICAN BLACKBIRDS – "Just to Spite You" CD

What a pleasant surprise, the joke's on me, color me impressed, etc. The MEXICAN BLACKBIRDS are sounding like an angelic chorus descended from Cloud Nine this morning, at least figuratively speaking. Music-wise they're tough and fast p. rock that waste no time with lengthy introductions, but cut to the chase and toss out a mess of catchy hooks and memorable choruses. I'm impressed by their sense of forward momentum, their devil-may-care abandon, and that elusive Quality X that separates the men from the boys and the women from the girls. Opening tracks "Blackbird Theme," "Lobotomy Eyes," and "Pocketful of Hate" were all that was necessary to win me over as a public admirer: it's tough-kid punk without a lot of bummer garage-rock trappings or dead weight. The MEXICAN BLACKBIRDS swing. (JH)
(Dirtnap, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111, www.dirtnaprecs.com)

MOTORPSYCHOS –CD

What's with all this spooky trash I'm getting? I swear all I get now is choad rock and spooky trash. Suck ass. The MOTORPSYCHOS are a mixture of big riffs and lyrics about vampires and all that nonsense. It sounds likes the same song over and over again fourteen times. This is pretty much a waste of my time so I will just say this "nice cover art, I'm sure IRON MAIDEN is super jealous". (BM)
(www.motorpsychosrock.com)

LOS MUERTOS CONFEDERADOS – "Ya Sin Tabaco Y Todo Cerrao" CD

Surf-influenced rockabilly/rock and roll with some very appealling oddball elements, most effectively flamenco and MORRICONE western soundtracks. Very diverting, despite the intrusion of some cheesy keyboards and some songs that go on too long for their own good. (DD)
(Nova Express, Demeure du Levant 21, Chemin des Carrieres 71150 Chagny, FRANCE, kaisernova@aol.com)

NTX + ELECTRIC – "We are the Wild Beast" CD

NTX+ELECTRIC incorporate synth, mechanistic drumming, heavy reverb and deep-throated sax in a way that suggests smoke bombs, strobe lights, and New York No Wave noise in the vein of MARS or CONTORIONS. It's no secret that I have a certain fondness for this kind of "difficult" material, closet new waver that I am. "Walk Through Fire" opens the ceremony, building from a low rumble to a full-tilt avalanche at its conclusion…it's a kind of deep-space drone, the latest Voyager probe spinning past Pluto and into the depths of the Void. Charmnig noise that means far more (to me) in 2003 than boa-clad glam rock or weight-training hardcore ever could. (JH)
(www.swarmofangels.com/ntx)

NET WEIGHT - "Intentalo" LP

17 tracks of barked-out screaming put over competent fast hardcore that really never lets up. I have a feeling that even if this were sung in English, I still wouldn't understand most of what was being said. At times this reminds me of LOS CRUDOS with their speed and intensity (and not because they sing in Spanish), and at other times it reminds me of a modern straight edge hardcore band with it's tastefully placed guitar octaves and harmonics. I would definitely be interested in checking out this band live. This is some quality stuff. (CC)
(Mala Raza Apdo. 6037, 50080 Zaragoza, SPAIN)

NINE POUND HAMMER / SOUTH 75 – split EP

Two macho, southern rock bands. You probably are already familiar with NINE POUND HAMMER. It looks like they are back together. These are two new songs. Not as dirty as they used to be. The live "Ain't Hurtin' Nobody" is about a Vietnam Vet who was killed by the police when they discover his marijuana plants. SOUTH 75 have more of a good ol' boy feel. Slower suff rock stuff with all the necessary trimmings. (CK)
(Eugene, mark@eugenerecords.com)

NOTHING FAMOUS – "Powerless Tool" CD

Despite their name, this band reminds me of a lot of really big bands, particularly the ones on FAT. Like warm flat beer and stale pizza, this sound loses its charm after the millionth time. Common people, stop forming cover bands and saying the songs are yours. (MM)
(Cheapskate)

OF DEATH – "Build a Bridge and Get Over It" CD

Great title. Hectic paced, unrelenting discordance and distortion, off-kilter rhythms, and a vocalist that literally sounds like he is squealing like a pig atonally (or perhaps screaming through a small pipe?) and only occasionally does an understandable, normal voice come through to recite a line or two words. The music has an instrumental feel to it because of this. Definitely not your normal punk rock. Fans of LIGHTNING BOLT, PINK AND BROWN, the Chicago Noise-Rock scene, etc, would approve. (WM)
(Alone, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126, www.alonerecords.com)

OI POLLOI – "Fuaim Catha" CD

CD release of their epic 1999 LP. 'Tis a potent blend of CONFLICT informed punk, tribal beats, Oi, reggae, rock, traditional Gaelic music, well-used samples and text from a speech by Chief Seattle, a 19th century Native American chief. Intelligent righteous anarchist philosophizers citing history, nature and morality as proof that the capitalist pig-fucks that attempt to rule our very existences will not, cannot, win. Essential! (WM)
(Combat Rock Industry, PO Box 65, 11101 Riihimäki, FINLAND)

OKTOBR – "Bobby's Song" EP

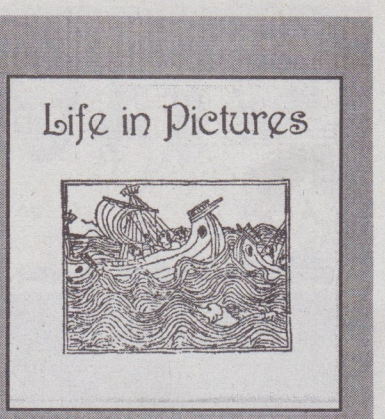
Fast thrashy Umeå styled Swedish hardcore. Intensely pissed as fuck sXe brutality. Awesome! This shit is seriously furious. Intelligent political lyrics with little literary excerpts after each song explain the basis for each song's lyrical content. Tough and fist pounding—these are some passionately pissed as fuck hardcore anthems for some serious thrash mosh madness. Aggressive, energetic, fast and raging with screamed intense vocals. DS-13 fans take note. (LG)
(Yellow Dog, PO Box 55 02 08, 10372, Berlin, GERMANY)

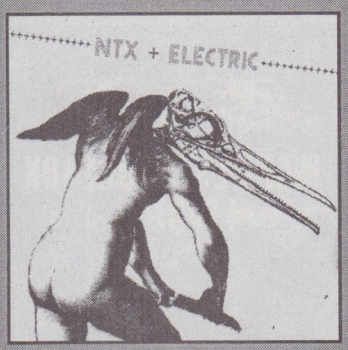
OMA HANS – "Trapperfieber" LP

Stuff like this usually only comes in on CD. Fairly generic mid-paced melodic punk, with German vocals. The guitars occasionally get interesting, and some of the songs are fairly catchy, but without any kind of vocal hook to latch on to, I'm lost here. Maybe if I spoke German. (AM)
(Schiffen, Reeperbahn 63, 20359 Hamburg, GERMANY; www.schiffen.de)

OVER AND OUT – "Dying to Live" CD

How about a little sXe hardcore from North Carolina to get your day going? OVER AND OUT go through the paces with some paint by the numbers hardcore. Fast and aggressive, with a lot of modern day flair that immediately draws comparison to most of the roster on Bridge Nine. In the end, I didn't think this bad or anything, just rather uninspiring. (RC)
(Stab And Kill, PO 52084, Boston, MA 02205, www.stabandkill.com)





OVER MY DEAD BODY – "Sink or Swim" CD

Whoa! From the first song I can already tell that this is *much, much* better than their last full length. Everything about this record is well executed, from the KID DYNAMITE influenced track "Bricks", to the great song about blind patriotism called "Patriotic Cattle Call". OVER MY DEAD BODY is one of the few bands that can pull off the mixing of different hardcore styles to make a good solid full-length. For all the haters that counted these guys out, these San Diego straight edge stalwarts are back and stronger than ever. (CC)
(Indecision, PO Box 6052, Garden Grove, CA 92846)

PARKHURST – CD

These dudes sound very akin to a J-CHURCH with a little more bollocks (y'know, if they had two guitarists), and endorse vegan footwear. Two good reasons to pick this up. (RK)
(www.parkhurstonline.com)

PART II – "Weeping, Wailing, and Gnashing of Teeth" 10"

Crazy emo core with occasional creepy AFI-ish background vocals (only know what that AFI sounds like cause of my housemate, just so you know). There is a particularly charming "wooo!" on side B which wins me over, but that really has nothing to do with the record. (MM)
(Coldbringer, PO Box 65144, Los Angeles, CA 90065)

PHANTOM LIMBS – "Displacement" CD

Punk-wave? Goth-wave?…fuck, I dunno what new label is being used these days to describe these mutants. Creepy crawl goth/punk with crazy vocals and a wandering organ. Like a more tweaked LOST SOUNDS mixed with the DEAD KENNEDYS and George Tabb's old band the FALSE PROPHETS. I really like the craziness of this band (who are even more fucked up live), but listening to the whole thing was just a bit too much for me. Not for the faint-hearted. (TB)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092)

PHOBIA – "Grind Your Fucking Head In" LP

What can I say about PHOBIA that hasn't already been said?? You should know the drill by now: Total Grind Annihilation!! Gone are the days of their dreadlocks but the same cannot be said of the power of their raw crushing grind. (WM)
(Deep Six, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510-6911)

PINK SWORDS – "One Night High" CD

Are pink swords the same as pork swords? If so, then these PINK SWORDS should be right up Shane White's alley (no pun intended). I can almost smell the beer and ciggies coming off this CD, and I can imagine seeing this gang of Lone Star no-hopers in some cruddy dive smashed out of my mind on cheap booze. These badass motherfuckers are continuing the Texas tradition of bands like the MOTARDS and the RIVER CITY RAPISTS playing fucked up trashy punk rock. More out of control than label mates the MARKED MEN but I'm sure they wouldn't be shy of sharing a stage or a beer with 'em. (TB)
(Mortville, PO Box 4263, Austin, TX 78765)

PLAN B – "Picturesque" CD

Goddamn! How did this sneak past the *MRR* censors!? Not only does it clock in at the shitty end of the whole Vagrant indie-pop wimpy/weasely sound (not in itself necessarily a bad thing—I like some of that shit), but these guys are fucking Christians. I don't mean they are having sex with Christians (I suspect as decent God-fearing adolescents, they are saving the shagging for marriage and procreation), but they are honest-to-God, burn 'em at the stake Christians. All thanking God and shit. Yet more proof, as if we needed it, that simply put, God doesn't rock. (RK)
(Dirty Work)

THE PLOT TO BLOW UP THE EIFFEL TOWER / NECKTIE PARTY – split EP

This was recorded a while ago, NECKTIE PARTY long since having broken up. Both bands play chaotic hardcore with a slight pretension to free jazz—the type of hardcore that draws white belt hipsters to warehouses like flies on shit. Taken outside the warehouse environment and enjoyed without the dubious benefit of a 40oz and a gaggle of Oakland glitterati, this stuff stands up. THE PLOT TO BLOW UP THE EIFFEL TOWER rock especially hard on this one. (AM)
(Can't Never Could, 3744 First Ave #4, San Diego, CA 92103)

THE PONYS – "Wicked City" EP

Two tracks of straight up simple mid-tempo raw rock n' roll from this midwestern three piece. "Wicked City" has a healthy dose of distortion (though not nearly as much as most of the releases on Big Neck records) and is a catchy number, though a bit long-winded and plodding I thought. The flip "Little Friends" is the winner here, minimal with a hooky ringing guitar sound and a repetitive chorus that will stick with you. (RR)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195)

IGGY POP & JAMES WILLIAMSON – "Jesus Loves the Stooges" 10"

Sure he does, who doesn't? Jesus does not love reissues of tracks that shouldn't have been released in the first place, such as the dull, loungey gospel jam that is the title song (especially with a 3-D cover for "collectors"—do such cretins actually exist, or are these things only purchased by speculators operating on the "greater fool" theory?). Three tracks of the abysmally produced *Kill City* demos don't make this any better an offering. Christ almighty! that shit sounds like Elton John (the songs themselves are okay, so why don't some of you bands cover those *Kill City* tracks, which can be so easily improved upon, instead of fruitlessly beating your heads against STOOGES covers?) Pax vobiscuit. (DD)
(BOMP!)

POPULAR SHAPES – "Bikini Style" CD

What would happen if a band resolved to simultaneously channel the KENT 3, the DICKIES, YUMMY FUR and some other band too obscure to remember? What could happen? Oh well, guess we'll never…wait! This record playing…there it is! They've managed to smush a catchy-whiny racket into an artistic straitjacket and do the

'Twist 'n' Squirm' all day long. Stupendous hand-clapping punk rock with the elements of several previous generations of arty-parties flowing thru their veins. Now I have another regret, missing their Parkside show. Scheisse. Invest now. (RW)
(On/On Switch, PO Box 641122, San Francisco, CA 94164, www.ononswitch.com)

PRETTY LITTLE FLOWER – "Swarming Industrial Cancer" EP

I wasn't too sure what to expect of this 7" given the band name and the title of the record. Let's just say that I was humorously amused by the first notes of fast, fast crust; thick distortion guitar, deep low and throat shredded mid/high vox spewing forth hatred against the profit-mongers and destroyers of life, all set to unrelenting, quick paced drums. They cover CRIPPLE BASTARDS and TERRORIZER. The recording is a little thin but it suits their brutal attack style well. The packaging is pretty cool, as well. Well worth yer time. (WM)
(Rescued From Life, PO Box 14821, Haltom City, TX 76117, www.rescuedfromlife.com)

THE PROCEDURE – "Rise of the New Reason" CD

Fast paced metallic hardcore that has more than one mosh part per song. Uh… and what's with the whiney singy parts? Gross. Ok this is just a metal band and has more in common with LINKIN PARK and other MTV ready garbage than say BLACK FLAG. This style sucked when folx were trying to do it ten years ago and sucks even more now. I hope Paul from SHEER TERROR finds you in a dark alley one night and beats you to a pulp. (MT)
(Blackout, 931 Madison St., Hoboken, NJ 07030)

RADICAL UP / DEFECTIVE FORCE – "Lakeside Punks" split EP

DEFECTIVE FORCE has a style reminiscent of TERVEET KADET, with croaked vocals and a slamming HC attack energized by a static of guitar noise; "Useless Resist" is particularly potent, and both their songs sound almost as good at 45 RPM. RADICAL UP has a more melodic style, with singalong choruses that work to best advantage in. We Aren't Originally the Lower Class," with a BOVVER WONDERLAND sound. "Set Up Incident" is a catchy tune that shows the influence of British street punk. A varied and extremely likable release. (SS)
(Shot & Shout, 1-9 Magoheiji, Ohmihachiman-city, Shiga JAPAN)

RAEIN – "Il N'y a Pas de Orchestre" LP

Fuck yeah! It's been a long time since a record kicked my ass like this. A ten song whirlwind full of urgency and intensity. Italy's RAEIN play amazingly well crafted emo-hardcore full of manic energy, anger, and sincerity. Not a bit stale. Not a bit math-metal. Absolutely no bullshit here. Fucking Great! (VH)
(React With Protest, Fam Ulbrich, Vechtestr. 09, 33775 Versmold, GERMANY, www.reactwithprotest.org)

THE RAMBLIN' AMBASSADORS – "Avanti" CD

An instrumental band with more rock than trad surf bands but more attention to melody and hooks than many of the untrad bands, not too far removed from what might result from crossing MAN OR ASTROMAN and DEATH VALLEY (comparison with the latter are pretty much inevitable by the inclusion of the MORRICONE classic "Sixty Seconds To What," which makes for great karaoke if you know the lyrics from the chart-topping (in Italy) single: "Let the sun shine—on the sins of men!"). These boys also know that brevity is the soul of wit, more power to them. (DD)
(Mint, PO Box 3613, Vancouver, BC V68 396, CANADA, www.mintrecs.com)

MARKY RAMONE AND THE SPEED KINGS – "Good Cop, Bad Cop" EP

Wow, this is a whole lotta suck. Marky Ramone will do anything to stay in the spotlight. One more bad record Mark, and "Operation: Remove the Wig" will begin. Don't say I didn't warn you. (BM)
(Bootleg Booze, c/o Larsson, V. Kyrkogatan 68, 67151 Arvika, SWEDEN, www.bootlegbooze.com)

RAZOR CRUSADE – "Are You Wired?" CD

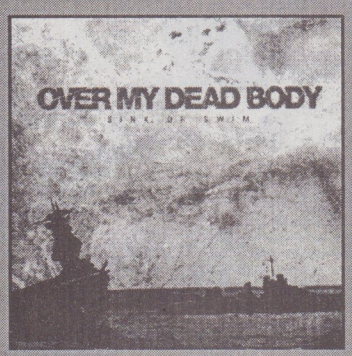
Clean-cut kids from the Netherlands play six songs of modern hardcore. Imagine a more straightforward, melodic, and at times uplifting, version of the last REFUSED album. It's too polished, and not as confrontational as I think a hardcore band should sound. Certainly no BLACK FLAG, but the song writing is good. For fans of the HOPE CONSPIRACY, STRIKING DISTANCE and their ilk, this is definitely worth checking out. (VH)
(Reflections, Spoorwegstraat 17, 6828 AP Arnhem, THE NETHERLANDS, www.reflectionsrecords.com)

REACTIONARY 3 – "Reactionary Songs" EP

This is what you'd get if you crossed the BIG BOYS (minus the funk) with emo, or something. It's great. You know, before they were called the MINUTEMEN, the MINUTEMEN were called the REACTIONARIES. I wonder if REACTIONARY 3 realize this. Anyway, this is right up my alley. The songs sound honest and passionate. And I'm a sucker for a three-piece. Praise the gods of the reviewer copy. (AM)
(Obscurist, PO Box13077, Gainesville, FL 32604-1077; obscurist@hotmail.com)

RED LETTER DAY – "Chance Meetings: The Best of… 1985-1999" CD

I'm ashamed to say that I've never heard RED LETTER DAY until now, even though I lived in England throughout most of their existence. The name rings a bell and I think I remember when their split with the SECT came out. From Portsmouth (on the south coast of England) RED LETTER DAY began during the start of a lean period for British punk rock, just at the tail end of both the CRASS/anarcho-punk and the oi/*Punk and Disorderly* scenes. Musically the band reminds me of the MEMBERS, NEWTOWN NEUROTICS, UK SUBS (and even NEW MODEL ARMY, though I'm not sure why) they have that 1979 sound that was popular with a few bands in the mid 80s, the SECT and MEGA CITY FOUR are two that spring to mind. They wrote some really good songs, with memorable choruses and musicianship, "Wherever You May Run" and "Last Night" are great punk anthems, while the rest of the album is solid, there's no bad songs—and if you think about it that's rare—for a band to go for fourteen years and not stink at some point, though it has to be said it *is* a "best of," I'm sure there's a few clangers lurking in their back catalogue somewhere… then again maybe not I'm glad I got this to review—it sucks that a good band nearly slipped by without me knowing it. (AD)
(Zip, 116 New Montgomery St., Suite 200, San Francisco, CA 94105)



RED LETTER DAY – "Nettle" CD

The recent release from this Brit punk band that goes back to the 80s. With two borrowed members from THIRST, this four song EP is hit and miss. Two of the tracks are melodic punk but seem badly mixed or produced. Not so much soft, more just uneven. A second acoustic version of one song as well as a throwaway rock track makes this average at best. Grab their recent "best of" collection for a better showing from these guys. (RL)
(ZIP,116 New Montgomery St., Suite 200, San Francisco, CA 94105, www.ziprecords.com)

REIGNING SOUND / THE HENTCHMEN – split EP

Two Rolling Stones covers, one of the later frills and flares era the other of tight pants and pointy boots drug free happier days. REIGNING SOUNDS I do believe have the same song tucked away in the corner of there excellent debut L.P. but for those collectors of Norton who'll want this regardless, expect an almost laid back early BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN approach on this little number. Enjoyable yes, ground breaking, umm, no. The HENTCHMEN basically stay close to the RnB flavor of the original. Poppy to a degree with a lot of jingle jangle appeal I seem to like in my retro outfits. (SD)
(Norton)

RESISTOLEROS – "Rock 'n' Roll Napalm" CD

Big punk rock from a five-piece combo that bring East Coast workhorses the ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN to mind. Big hair, leaking tattoos and leather jackets worn onstage, that sort of affair. Words like "Pin the Crime," "Assault & Battery," "You Lose, I Win," etc. Detroit meets the Lower East Side, or the DEAD BOYS meet the CANDY SNATCHERS…there 'tis. (JH)
(Steel Cage, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125, www.steelcagerecords.com)

RIPCORDZ – " What if They Had a Revolution…" CD

Mid-tempo punk with gruff vocals from Quebec. They enjoy getting drunk and having mohawks and hanging out with a lot of cute punk girls (if the inside cover is anything to go by) and generally fucking shit up. This is pretty good solid fun punk, pissed without being bitter, and drunk without being too dumb. Maybe a slowed down QUINCY PUNKS would be a good comparison…or a non-political THE PIST. (AD)
(2230 rue Coursol, Montreal, Quebec H3Z 1C5, CANADA)

RIVERDALES – "Phase Three" CD

Okay, pay attention: Dan Lumley has replaced Dan Sullivan (a.k.a. Dan Panic) on drums, but Dan Schafer (a.k.a. Dan Vapid) is still there, as of course is Ben Foster (a.k.a. Ben Weasel) all of whom were in SCREECHING WEASEL together apart from Dan Lumley who *was* in SCREECHING WEASEL but only after Dan Vapid and Dan Panic had left—however not before Ben Weasel had left (of course) or Jughead, with whom he and Dan Vapid (a.k.a. Dan Schafer) had already played with in THE MOPES, after which Lumley and Schafer went on to play together in THE METHADONES without Jughead, though Dan (Lumley, not Schafer or Sullivan) continued to play with him (and Ben Weasel) in SCREECHING WEASEL though not BEN WEASEL, which did feature Dan Schafer and (I think) the guy who replaced Dan Lumley in THE METHADONES…but I could be wrong. Did you get all that? I'm really happy this came out, I need a "Weasel" fix every year or so, it's been the only constant in my life since I heard "I Can't Stand Myself" on the John Peel show in 1987. Let's face it—the RIVERDALES are SCREECHING WEASEL's deformed half-brother who lives in the attic and survives on buckets of fish heads—coming out only to tour with GREEN DAY and appear on the soundtracks of lame feel-sorry-for-the-fat-kid movies. After a six-year hiatus, this is the third RIVERDALES album. Featuring the guys I just mentioned and recorded at (where else) Sonic Iguana by (who else) Mass Giorgini, anyone who is at all interested in what this sounds like already pretty much *knows* what this sounds like. It starts off pretty much where the last ones left off though I think it sounds a lot more like THE MOPES and THE METHADONES than the others, though that is to be expected…and is no bad thing in this reviewer's humble opinion. One nice surprise is a version of "Wait It Out", the song written for THE LILLINGTONS (God, I'm such a fuckin' dork), and "Out of My Heart" and "I Believe in You and Me" are both belters justifying the price of admission alone. On fifth listen, a quick capsule review: better than the second one though maybe not the first one. (AD)
(145 Records)

THE RITES – LP

Like Jekyll and Hyde this band are a little side project that has spawned a monster. They don't need the "members of…" bullshit tag but if I whisper the names TEAR IT UP and CUT THE SHIT you'll know these boys are not going to be dicking around. Full throttle 80s inspired hardcore which uses power rather than speed to slap you upside the noggin. Like a slimmed down POISON IDEA these shaggy-haired good-for-nothings go for the throat with songs of woe and despair. Like any good hardcore record, blink and its over. (TB)
(DeadAlive, PO Box 42593, Philadelphia, PA 19101)

ROCKBOTTOM – "Throw Away" CD

Loud powerpop CD by this Japanese combo with the emphasis on the *power*. Ah hell, what this is a late 70s new-wave rock'n roll record like if the UK SUBS had got their start putting out tuff records on Stiff Records. How about ERIC CARMEN if he put out a record on Raw Records? Too much? They get a riff and pound it into yer face, with group vocals getting that chorus thoroughly embedded in your molars. It's smashing good. I really wish that the FIRESTARTER record had mainlined some of this attitude during their sessions, but…sigh…we all gotta graduate some day I suppose…(RW)
(Target Earth, 505 Lupinas Hiranuma, 1-1-15 Hiranuma, Nishiku, Yokohama 220-0023, JAPAN)

ROTTEN BOIS – "Pogo Beer & Spikey Hair… This is Our Life" CD

Man, after the beating my ears have taken this month with all the metal and whiney crap this ROTTEN BOIS discography comes as to me as my audio savior! Documenting their history from 1997-2002, this disc takes us through 27 tracks of glue sniffin', spikey haired, pogo-riffic punk rock courtesy of this fine Italian band. Those of you who would call the sweet sounds of early VIOLENT SOCIETY, The BOILS, or The CASUALTIES your friend, will be happy to make an acquaintance with this CD. Great! (MT)
(Pure Punk, CP 214, 43100 Parma, ITALY, www.purepunk.com)

THE SADDEST LANDSCAPE – "The Sound of the Spectacle" CD

Jesus, where do the kids come up with these ridiculous band names nowadays? The SADDEST LAND-

SCAPE just seems to be a bit too pretentious and highbrow for me. Musically, this is total screamo that borders between chaos and melody that mixes rapid fire drumming, tempo changes galore, jangly guitars and urgent screamed vocals. Nothing memorable, but a good listen nonetheless. (RC)
(Coptercrash, PO Box 6095, Hudson, FL 34667; coptercrashrecords@yahoo.com)

SATURDAY NIGHT KIDS – "Birthday Girl" EP

I'm going to write this review in lyric form and maybe these guys will turn it into a song… a better song. "Oooh wha oh oh oh! I just don't know, why middle age guys write such crappy songs, about girls and all those generic things. Oooh wha oh oh oh! I just don't know, why middle age guys ruin a great DEVIL DOGS song and play at half speed. Oh no! You suck so bad! Oh no! You're as old as my dad! Oh no! Oh no! Oh noooooooo!" This blows *so* bad. One original on the a-side that sounds like a DARLINGTON reject (i.e, a sappy QUEERS reject) and the b-side is a throw away cover of the DEVIL DOGS' "Don't Do It To Your Self" minus all balls, guts and snarl…. Played really slow. To quote my upstairs neighbor, "if I ever see this thing again I'm going ot smash it". (BM)
(Route 13, 1109 Prospect Ave, Wilmington, DE 19809, punkrockln1@comcast.net)

SHOT POINTBLANK – "Kill... Breath... Kill" CD

Eight tracks of brutally mundane PANT ERA worship from Australia. SHOT POINTBLANK or me, it doesn't matter... but please pull the trigger and get it over with before they make another record. (VH)
(Surprise Attack, 2601 Peach St., Erie, PA 16508)

SHOOTIN GOON – "Left for Dead" CDEP

Five tracks of pop infused ska, and gasp, its really good! They manage to combine the best bits of CITIZEN FISH, the SPECIALS (well, the are Brits) with the more commercial later sounding LESS THAN JAKE. Throw in a very full horn section, and some excellent class-conscious lyrics, and you've got a real keeper here. (RK)
(Good Clean Fun, www.goodcleanfunrecords.co.uk)

SICKIDZ – "Now and Then" CD

This is sooooooooo spooky. I'm scared. Really. I have goose bumps. Hold me Mike Thorn! Hold me!! Their booklet says "We are the SICKIDZ, 70s Philly punks who achieved a dubious notoriety over time…" Uh, huh…. Then how come I've never heard of you? "… by virtue of cataclysmic live performances and a handful of recordings, legandary status was attained" Again, who are you? Apparently these old fuckers thougth they were quite hot shit back in the day and decided to reform twenty years a later with a CD full of five new records and four old demos. I'm sorry but any band that actually refers to themsleves as "legandary" and/or brags about "dubious nororiety" and yet hasn't even made themselves a footnote in punk rock history needs to be bitch-slapped. Their music sounds like a lot of bad CRAMPS and MISFITS covers. Look kids, grampy used to be in a punk band! (BM)
(Steel Cage, PO Box 29247, Philidelphia, PA 19125, www.steelcagerecords.com)

SKYLINE AWAKE – "Fight Your Route of Identity" CD

Straight-up emo from Maryland, it's very melodic and has a lot of harmonies and breaks and build ups and stuff and it's very well played but it's just not really my bag, or the bag of this mag. Drag. Though like I say it's not bad, like a heavier BRANDSTON if you know what the hell that is… (AD)
($8ppd: Rosewater, PO Box 30, Riverdale, MD 20738)

SMUT PEDDLERS – "Ten Inch" 10"

Motherfucker's got a CLASH patch on his jacket on the back cover. That's right. Let it be known that Kenny Kaos is against peddling smut; it just ain't right. Still, this is some good shit. It's mid-tempo and it's got guitars and drums and bass. And it's got that foot-tapping, head-bouncing thing going on. And it's got the rage that makes it more than just "good". This is reminiscent of early California hardcore; bands like BLACK FLAG, THE CIRCLE JERKS and THE ADOLESCENTS come to mind. Any band that sings about how fucked up the skateparks in California are has got my vote. This record is fucking awesome. (KK)
(Dead Beat, PO Box 283, Los Angeles, CA, 90078)

SNEEZE – "Chronic Wave" EP

What a blast outta nowhere, this is one of the fiercest riff-monsters I've heard in a 'gator's age. Three track 7" punker on an obscure Japanese label that has everything that you need in the catchy vein, plus a loud slashing production job to get the point across. Everyone who's been pining for mid-90s REGISTRATORS…get this and drool for the future. Give us an LP rapido, yer ready boys! (RW)
(Needle, Usui-House 2F, 3-22-8 Kouenji-Kata, Suginami-Ku, Tokyo 166-0002, JAPAN)

SOMETHING ABOUT VAMPIRES AND SLUTS – "I'm Not Afraid of Sex" CD

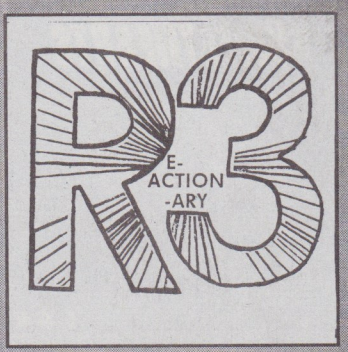
More Now Wave for the New Wave vanguard. Moments suggest second-album CURE, the PASSIONS later records or a hyped-up take on both. You know, Wave Moderne. I will admit to being a tad overdosed on this sound, but not to the extent that I'll say this record is bad. My spirit may be flagging, but these guys can proudly fly theirs. They are very effective at this sound, and have some originality to boot. (RW)
(Coptercrash, PO Box 6095, Hudson, FL, 34667)

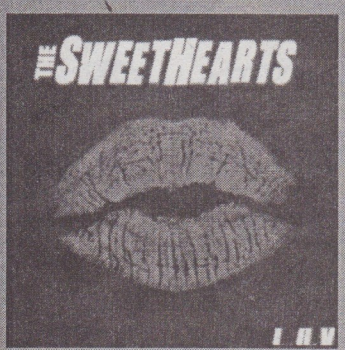
SPARK OF LIFE – "Promises Made, Promises Kept" CD

Emoliscious hardcore, that sounds like TEXAS IS THE REASON, QUICKSAND, and probably another band that I can't remember right now. You get the picture. There are twelve songs worth of that picture on this CD. It's not bad, it's okay—and if you like the two bands I rattled off then you'll probably like this too. (AS)
(www.loreieirecords.com)

THE SPOONS – "Take The World As It Comes" LP

Reissue of an obscure 1980s 60s-style band—or is it actually a current band doing an authentic revival of the 1980s 60s-style sound? I dunno (and it would be cheating to check the Internet, which is not 1980s 60s-style at all). At any rate, they've got it down: covers of songs that the LYRES covers, SONICS/WAILERS covers, a couple of STOOGES covers and more than a dash of rawk to stretch the envelope, a keyboard souns that sounds like an early Casio pseudo-organ sound. I should know: I lived through the 1980s 60s, man: I was there. (DD)
(No Brains, www.nobrains.com)





THE STAND BY ME – "Don't Ever Change" CD

This Japanese band cranks out the '77 or at least '79! Obviously schooled on Brit stuff, the biggest influence here is COCKSPARRER as well as STIFF LITTLE FINGERS and the BOYS. Great songs, good enough playing, and loose production make this a strong retro release. (RL)
(1977, www.1977records.com)

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS – "Inflammable Material" LP

Before the club scene was ripped apart by paramilitary and drug gang turf wars, the biggest integrator of the North of Irelands divided community was the flourishing punk scene. No other band epitomized this in the late 70s more than Belfast's STIFF LITTLE FINGERS. This band crossed the sectarian divide in personnel and following, never backing off from the issues that wreaked havoc on the six counties. Songs such as "Alternative Ulster" and "Barbed Wire Love" bear testament to their uncompromising stance. Rough and edgy but never relenting on the soul and passion, this band could embarrass many of the crop of rock that passes as punk nowadays. Without the STIFF LITTLE FINGERS you could easily subtract the STRIKE, the BELTONES, SMOGTOWN and a million others from your record collection. A fine bootleg- the great quality befitting one of the top five greatest punk albums. (SD)
(no address)

STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER – "Armed Robbery" EP

Self-indulgent and over-important to such a degree that I find myself wondering if STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER is some kind of obscure precursor to MAN IS THE BASTARD, I don't know why the fuck else anyone would press this… but it's not. At times STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER sound a lot like that DEEP WOUND demo 7" that turned out to be such a big waste of time. It's Fast, sloppy, redundant, hardcore that seems to dig up every HC cliché in the book. Hardtotakeseriously core… not funny? Yeah, I know. But neither is STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER (VH)
(Meg, 6676 N. Bendel, Fresno, CA 93722)

STRIKE ANYWHERE – "Exit English" CD

These guys have become one of my favorite bands and with this release I hope they conquer the punk world. I had heard of a "new" sound but this shows no signs of letting up to me. This does sound "bigger" than the last LP at times but the power, the social politics, and mighty vocals are still here. Give this DAG NASTY and PROPAGHANDI status! A great release by one of today's great bands. (RL)
(Jade Tree, www.jadetree.com)

STUDDOGS – "The Gospel According to…" CD

Some of the biggest and bottom-heaviest sounds I've ever heard captured on plastic, no joke. "Sick 'n' Tired" benefits from a remarkably low-down-and-loud chug that perfectly suits the whisky-fueled blues band churn out. Lyric-wise and aesthetically they're strictly run-of-the-mill ("She's Dangerous", "Hey Baby," "That's Rock 'n' Roll", etc.) but they deserve attention if only for the remarkable tooth-grinding fidelity they have working on their side. I'm convinced, yep. (JH)
(www.thestuddogs.com)

SUPERCHUNK – "Cup of Sand" 2xCD

The third singles, b-sides, and unreleased collection from these guys. Although I was once fanatical about these guys, I have not recently kept up with all their recent singles and EP's. Well this collection makes me aware of my loss as it is packed with more driving, noisy, guitar pop that I would have sought if I had heard it. Light on the pure indie sound here, this is a great collection for fans and neuvos. Easily one of the 90s (and 2000s?) best bands. (RL)
(Merge, PO Box 1235, Chapel Hill, NC 27514, www.mergerecords.com)

SWEETHEARTS – "L.U.V" CD

I was dreading listening to this. After all the crap I've had to sit through today this didn't look too promising (drummer has a blue mohawk, girl singer with bangs) but I am pleasantly surprised. Not bad at all. Reminds me of both the EYELINERS and the BOBBYTEENS (the singer, Linette, actually can mimic both Laura and Tina's voices quite well, though I'm not sure if it's intentional or not). Hmmmm. Y'know what, I'm kinda seeing simularities between NO DOUBT; front woman with bangs, drummer with stupid mohawk, dopey looking guy no one cares about and brown skinned bleach blonde guy writing half the songs… Nothing wrong with that I guess, but you can tell Ren and Linette run the show and the rhythm section is just along for the ride. (BM)
(Mortville, 2508 West 12th St, 306, Austin, TX, 78703, www.thesweethearts.net)

SWELLBELLYS – "Taking Care of Business" CD

Very fast angry punk from Scotland. If you like it hard and threatening then this is for you. Twice as hard and nastier than any of the "real punk" bands from this side of the pond (or anywhere else for that matter) SWELLBELLYS sound like a tough the EXPLOITED at Mach 10, and also bring to mind POISON IDEA for sheer ferocity. In fact there's your review in two words – velocity and ferocity. (AD)
(Town Clock, 39 Station Road, Thirsk, North Yorkshire, YO7 1QH, UNITED KINGDOM)

THANATOS570 – "Blood, Sweat, and Broken Strings" CD

THANATOS570 let loose with ten unbelievably high-energy youth crew anthems. It's positively positive, sing along hardcore with no macho bullshit. I'm really impressed with how well they pulled off the '88 sXe sound without sounding tired, stale, or predictable. It's a dumb band name, if you ask me, but the songs are great. (VH)
(Fast Action, www.fastactionrecords.com)

THEE JENERATORS – "Jenerator X" CD

These poor schlubs come all the way from Guernsey (a small island between England and France) so must have a tough time getting their 60s inspired rock out to the masses. The first track "Dirty Water" unfortunately is not a cover of the STANDELLS monster, but does have some of the same 60s crisp vibe that band had. This CD comes off a little tame, considering a lot of the sounds they are influenced by (WAILERS, BARBARIANS etc) were banging stuff out over 35 years ago!! For a more modern comparison think Midwesterners the MORTALS of even hints of the CYNICS. I just wanna hear more out of control fuzz with my 60s retro. (TB)
(Twist, Levanto, 6 Le Petit Clos, Rue Des Marais, Vale, Guernsey, Channel Islands, GY6 8AZ, UNITED KINGDOM)

THESE ARMS ARE SNAKES – "This Is Meant to Hurt You" 12"

This is somewhat overproduced, slick, emo-rock. You know, not the poppy DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL/WEEZER kind but the kind that still retains an element of hardcore or punk, however remote. Long songs, studio trickery, is that a piano? I guess the CD version is on Jade Tree, and I like this better than just about anything else I've heard from that label recently, but overall it's not really my cup of tea. I don't even know who to compare it to. This isn't meant as a dis, but it sounds just like stuff I've heard on MTV. Maybe they're headed that way. (AM)
(Second Nature, PO Box 413084, Kansas City, MO 64141-3084)

THESE ARMS ARE SNAKES – "This Is Meant to Hurt You" CDEP

An interesting new genre-bending brand of punk rock seems to have been created. With its elements of the MONORCHID, MILEMARKER, and the HOLY ROLLERS, THESE ARMS ARE SNAKES at first listen would be stuck into some sort of emo or DC sounding category. But then the thing that blows the whole labeling of this band is its underlying gloom and brooding feel of hipster sleaze. The only band I can compare it to is BLACK CAT MUSIC with their dark, moody, and depressing rock. I here by name this music (that seems to be growing on me with each listen): Sleaz-emo. Good. (AS)
(Jade Tree, 2310 Kennwynn Rd, Wilmington, DE, 19810, www.jadetree.com)

THINK I CARE – "Broken Knives" LP

I've heard a lot of people comparing this to INFEST, and while I can see similarities in the vocalist's delivery, this band is *much* slower. Almost every song has a very drawn out mid-paced part to it - which is something I normally get tired of really quickly. But THINK I CARE pulls it off without a hitch. Overall, this is a good record. The production is just raw enough to keep me interested. I am not sure I could of stomached all the mosh intros and breakdowns otherwise. Atomic Studios does a great job at making them sound very angry and nasty without coming off too slick (of course it doesn't hurt to have a very bitter, pissed-off frontman). Come to think of it, the vocalist also reminds me of Westbrook from KNIFE FIGHT. But maybe that's just me. Highly recommended to people that like old Boston hardcore and the slower side of INFEST. (CC)
(DeadAlive PO Box 42593 Philadelphia, PA 19101)

THREE MINUTE MOVIE – "The Film Reflects a Dramatic City" CD

The latest from Snuffy Smile. Pop punk with indie and emo overtones. SUPERCHUNK and J CHURCH come to mind. Good songs with nice guitar parts although the vocals hold this back just a little falling in-between personality and pure vocals. But for a newer band this is a fine release. (RL)
(Snuffy Smile, 4-1-16 Daita, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 155-0033, JAPAN, threeminutemovie@hotmail.com)

TOYS THAT KILL / FLESHIES – split EP

These two bands are on the same rock plateau. Running the same circuit, similar levels of musical proficiency and access to fancy recording methods and so forth. But they differ (on this record, anyway) in this way: FLESHIES=dirty. TOYS THAT KILL=clean. The FLESHIES song on here is called "My Buddy" and it rips! Like all of their songs, it is rock, but this one is more akin to CHEAP TRICK or THE REPLACEMENTS than, say, total Omni, turquoise spandex leopard print, butt rock like some of their songs. A fucking classic. A must-have for FLESHIES fans everywhere. The TOYS THAT KILL song is also good. It sounds a lot like later-era FYP, with the bratty kid singsong chorus. I sometimes think that their recordings are too polished, but a lot of people love that kind of thing. A fine release. You should go now and buy this. (JB)
(GC, PO Box 3806, Fullerton, CA. 92834)

TRANSISTOR TRANSISTOR – "Put Down the Bible Pick Up the Bottle" EP

TRANISISTOR TRANSISTOR plays hardcore that I think takes a cue from bands like ORCHID and the BLOOD BROTHERS. They are more melodic than those bands, though. PIXIES-style guitar leads. They have that whole "attitude" thing going on, with the ambiguously sexual lyrics. I think if you are into a lot of bands like the RED LIGHT STING, the BLOOD BROTHERS, and such, you will dig this record. It is well done, just not my taste. Another great recording by Will Killingsworth, formerly of ORCHID. Layout on this is pretty bad. It's really computer-graphicy and unappealing. (WR)
(Copter Crash, PO Box 6095, Hudson, FL, www.coptercrash.com)

TURBOSTAAT – "Flamingo" LP

I used to think that Germany only gave us good beer and punkers who could do lots of coke while wearing bikini briefs. Well TURBOSTAAT and BRAMBILLA have shown me that they can produce some fine melodic punk bands. TURBOSTAAT sing in all German, so I must admit to having no idea what they are singing about, but it sounds rocking. They do have a song that starts off with "I will kill you, I will kill you" so I like to think of it as their G.W. Bush song in my ignorance. See, who needs translations? (JF)
(Schiffen, www.schiffen.de)

TUSKS OF BLOOD – "Spirit of Blood" EP

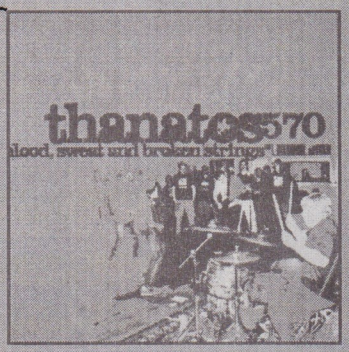
Slow to mid-tempo doomish grind that howls and growls like there is no tomorrow. Low rumbling bass lines (two bass players/no guitars) really stood out above all on the mediocre recording. Overall, I thought it was rather bland. (RC)
(End Theory, PO Box 375, Portland, OR 97207-375, tusksofblood@hotmail.com)

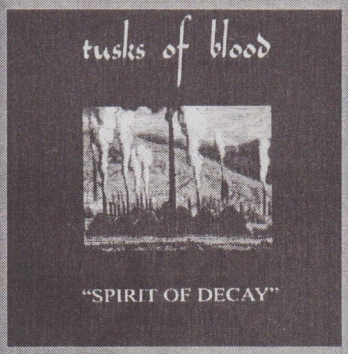
UNBROKEN – "The Death of True Spirit" CD

Here it is, just what all the hardcore kids have been waiting for. This is the reissue of UNBROKEN'S *Life. Love. Regret.* and *Ritual*. These two records originally came out back in the early 90s and were incredibly influential in setting the standard for hardcore being energized by metal. Mid-tempo music, that surges and pounds its way into your cranium. Metallic riffs dominate the soundscape, while booming vocals grab your attention. I have been pretty much burnt out on this musical style for many years now, but it was refreshing to hear these classics. (RC)
(Indecision, PO Box 6052, Garden Grove, CA 92846, www.indecisionrecords.com)

UNCURBED – "Chords for Freedom" 10"

Super intense, guitar driven Swedish HC. Flesh searing dual male vocals, brutal pounding rhythms,





amazing short scattered guitar solos injected in spurts over thick chunky bass lines. Super fast, super pissed. This record is really good. I guess it's a release actually recorded in 1999 and not released till now. Pick it up—it's fucking awesome. (LG)
(Yellow Dog, PO Box 550208 10372 Berlin, GERMANY)

UNKIND – LP

Ahhh, the international language of hardcore. This bunch of gloomy Finns doesn't have a lick of English in the lyrics but I know exactly where they are coming from. Dark brooding hardcore with haunting melodies, peddled on these shores by the like of TRAGEDY and FROM ASHES RISE. With (I'm sure) lyrics of technological control and human despair (I'm just hazarding a wild guess here). This shit is heavy as molasses, but the guitar melodies really give the songs depth and an odd sense of tunefulness. An epic release. (TB)
(Yellow Dog, PO Box 550208, 10372 Berlin, GERMANY)

UNHOLY GRAVE / CATHETER – "Grindcore" split EP

UNHOLY GRAVE step up to the plate with five songs recorded on a four-track in 2002 and although the sound is considerably thin they still manage to completely annihilate sound and fury in their inimitable style of crust-grind. Japanese devastation. CATHETER, on the flip, crush, kill, destroy, and lay total waste to their side of the 7" with three songs of hit-you-like-a-slab-of-concrete-core. Punishment from Colorado. EP comes with a 11"x17" color insert with lyrics from both bands and tons of photos from UNHOLY GRAVE's West Coast 2002 tour. Fresh. (WM)
(Rescued From Life, PO Box 14821, Haltom City, TX 76117, www.rescuedfromlife.com)

UPPERCUT – "Four Walls" CD

Ahhh, I remember the very first time I heard UPPERCUT. I was 15 and in my friend's basement. We were listening to a used copy of *Where The Wild Things Are* that we had just picked up. Our purchase was solely based on the fact that it had GORILLA BISCUITS on it. While we hadn't heard of any of the other bands, I remember that we were pretty impressed with RAW DEAL and OUTBURST. The one band that we absolutely hated was UPPERCUT. It really had nothing to do with their music, but with the fact that it was the first band we had ever encountered who wrote lyrics that were specifically criticizing the straight edge scene. Having just become straight edge, we were pretty bummed. Listening to this now, I have to say that UPPERCUT was a pretty good NYHC band for the times. Some of the tracks at the beginning of the CD actually remind me of a more modern *Get It Away*-era SSD or BROTHERHOOD. UPPERCUT turned into a band called MIND'S EYE, and their material is documented on the latter half of the CD (tracks 7-14). Unless you like ALICE IN CHAINS, these songs are utter crap. Surprisingly enough, the anti straight edge track "Am I Clear?" turned out to be their best song. Even more surprisingly, the lyrics are the only ones left off this insert. Interesting…(CC)
(Blackout, www.blackoutrecords.com)

URBAN WASTE – "Police Brutality" EP

I remember this one—I do. What you got is a legit reissue that looks like a bootleg, blown up from a measly 7" to a full-bodied 12" EP (something of a rarity itself in the 21st Century). The original '82 issue of *Police Brutality* is a minor classic of throated-shredding head-shaving New York 'core, with its speedy 1-2-1-2 attack. "I'm not inta *punk rock,* I'm not inta *hard core,* dontcha try to label me…" it's real and authentic, like most of the early piledriving releases that cracked the hardcore code. The impact of "No Hope" or "Wasted Life" hasn't been dimmed much by the passage of 21 years (good Christ!), and still sounds a lot tougher and fresher than most of what followed. Reagan still lives, URBAN WASTE still kill. (JH)
(Mad at the World, www.matwrecords.com)

USURP SYNAPSE – "Disinformation Fix" 2xCD

Highly influenced by the San Diego twitch-on-the-floor-and-throw-a-temper-tantrum bands like ANTIOCH ARROW, these two discs takes us through 60 tracks of their evolution from the audio representation of someone having a panic attack to their eventual progression into a bunch of boring, drawn out artsy crap. Digression is more like it. Man they totally mirror ANTIOCH ARROW—no lyrics or anything included, but I suppose they never were really about much of anything anyhow. (MT)
(Alone, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126, www.alonerecords.com)

THE VATICANS – "Commotion/Talking About You"

Dirty ole pottie mouth Shane White of RIP OFFS and smutty reviews in *Maximum* fame has decided to bare his soul again by taking on the axe in mod power- pop outfit THE VATICANS. Not sounding out of place in any of the recently released '79 mod comps such as *Mods Mayday* and what not; this does however hold extra weight due to the great female vocals. If your scooter has more lights and chrome than your average Italian hairdryer, if you believe that THE CIRCLES, THE V.I.P'S, MERTON PARKAS etc were the real thing and if your like me just have a thing for uplifting pop with an edge then I suggest you get a slice of this. As Mr. White might say as pleasurable as sucking the spunk form a gay tramps sock. (SD)
(Pure Filth, thevaticans@sbglobal.net)

VENA.CAVA – "So Evolved…" CD

If PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES got into a bike accident with JAWBREAKER, and some how lost some body parts, which some how re-fused into some sort of blob-like super hero who fights for justice and the right to use nutritional yeast with peanut butter, VENA CAVA would be this creation's faithful sidekick. (MM)
(Don't Quit Your Day Job, 3613 Reynard Way, San Diego, CA 92103)

WAGE OF SIN – "A Mistaken Belief in Forever" CD

Seven tracks of tough as fuck, mosh 'til you drop, metal mayhem. It's hard for me to take any metal bands seriously, but this is some of the heaviest shit I've heard in a long time. Plus the fact that WAGE OF SIN is all female makes their level of unrelenting brutality pretty damn impressive. (VH)
(Immigrant Sun, PO Box 150711, Brooklyn, NY 11215)

WASTED – "Here We Go Again" CD

A compilation of their EPs and compilation tracks with a couple of live tracks thrown in for good measure. WASTED come from Finland and play tough yet melodic punk with almost a street feel to it. Their earlier mate-

rial (which I haven't heard until now) is a lot faster and harder and the album shows their development from their hardcore roots, to the (early) RANCID meets (early) JAWBREAKER sound, which they have today. The disc contains a total of twenty-nine tracks spanning the last five years as well as two video tracks from their "Down and Out" album, which I believe I reviewed a year or two ago. I like WASTED a lot; they fill the gap between the more commercial sounding current punk bands around Scandinavia (BOMBSHELL ROCKS for example) and the underground ones (MANIFESTO JUKEBOX and ENDSTAND for example) without losing any of their clout. This will do nicely as I patiently wait for their next full-length… (AD)
(Combat Rock Industry, PI 65, 11101 Riihimaki, FINLAND)

WHATEVER IT TAKES – "A Fistful of Revolution/Stars and Skulls" CD

A pairing of the aforementioned records on one bumper CD. These dudes feature the "other" guitarist from ANTI-FLAG, but sound a lot more akin to a more muscular RITES OF SPRING, crossed with early JAWBREAKER (y'know, their first album, before they started writing the emo hits). I suspect that will have suitably wide appeal. (RK)
(A-F, www.a-frecords.com)

WHITE+OUTS – "Solid State/Coffin Nails"

Bash-bam-bam-bam-roll-roll-roll "It Ain't So"-strumm-strum-strum-budda-bam-budda-bam. The calendar fades to black. Flip it. Mumble-fumble-duh-duh-dee-duh-crank-it-up-bam-bam-bam-BASH! The lights slowly come back on. Wow, that's a really great punk 7"! If Bag Of Hammers still walked the Earth they would be putting out the next one by these guys. It is '78 or '92 or '03? Dunno, who cares, time is an illuuuuuuuusion…give several dollars to the WHITE+OUTS. (RW)
(Shit Sandwich, 3107 N. Rockwell, Chicago, IL, 60618, www.shitsandwichrecords.com)

WILDEBEESTS / THE KNAUGHTY KNIGHTS – split EP

… beautiful Norton Records company sleeve!!!! 60s London Records mock label… in my review bin!!!…Instant stirring below the belt…the KNAUGHTY KNIGHTS and WILDEBEESTS both doing classic ROLLING STONES covers! The bulge in my tight white jeans grew when I saw that the KNIGHTS do "Connection" my favorite from *Between the Buttons*!!!…their version only left me semi erect though…a little to straight forward rendition , Mick this vocalist is not… did get my temperature rising though…flipped it over and achieved full extension with the WILDEBEESTS version of "Please Go Home" a classic from *Flowers*!!! Hot stuff kiddies…Norton rules…(RR)
(Norton)

WORLD BURNS TO DEATH – "No Dawn Comes… Night Without End" EP

Four new blistering tracks from this Texas hardcore destruco-unit. On this EP WORLD BURNS TO DEATH explores the memory of the Holocaust. In specific, the brutal execution of ten children, during the final days of World War Two at the hands of the SS, at the Bullenhuser Damm School. Explaining that; while it maybe impossible to fully grasp the reality of the millions who died at Auschwitz, the image of ten small children hanged in a cellar is one that can be forever seared into one's mind as an example of the evils of humanity that must never come to pass again. This message is delivered through a potent aural assault of blazing hardcore punk, an amalgamation of classic hardcore like BASTARD, POISON IDEA and RIISTETYT, rammed through a Texas filter and presented to you like a kick in the fucking teeth. Brilliant. (MT)
(Hardcore Holocaust, PO Box 26742, Richmond, VA 23261, www.hardcoreholocaust.com)

ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE – "This is the Spark of Life" CD

ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE play metallic hardcore along the lines of SHAI HALUD and DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN, tearing through eight songs of intricate, well though out hardcore without getting carried away playing any prog-rock nonsense or seven minute solos. It's fast, hectic, and full of energy. (VH)
(Indecision, PO Box 6052, Garden Grove, CA 92846)

ZYMOTICS – "Watch That Worm" EP

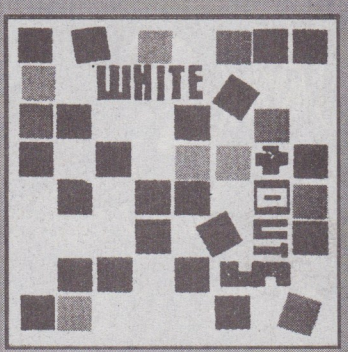
When last we checked in with our friends the ZYMOTICS they were a perfectly satisfying garage-punk combo from an isolated Japanese suburb, had a 7" came out in '98 or so. You don't usually see a band go quiet for this long and come back, but they have returned with a louder, heavier sound that shows more avant influences that totally work in an almost A FRAMES kind of way. Still primitive but with a skooch more ambition, this is a really cool addition to the short list of essential non-retro-obsessed wave-punk 7". This here Needle Records label has put out three fantastic records this month. Interested? Try Target Earth Records mailorder on the web; they ain't cheap (it's Japan stupid) but they are almost unique for their ability to answer email in English!!! (RW)
(Needle, Usui-House 2F, 3-22-8 Kouenji-Kata, Suginami-Ku, Tokyo 166-0002, JAPAN)

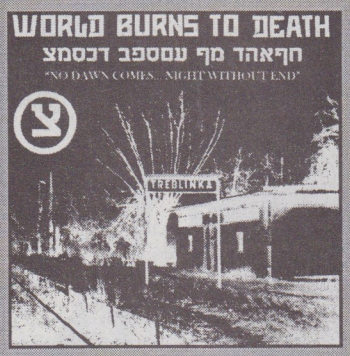
V/A – "Dying Alive… Living Dead—a Czech Raw Punk Compilation" LP

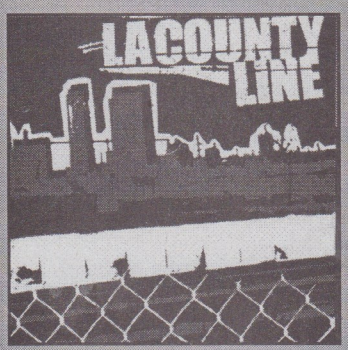
While the *Victim of a Safety Pin* compilation reviewed in this issue documents the historical beginnings of Polish punk, this excellent album is a fine representation of not only the modern state of Czech hardcore, but the 40 page booklet contained within also provides an excellent history of Czech punk. Musically this is across the board—from the full blasting grind of GRIDE, to the powerfully anthemic INNOXIA CORPORA. From the Scandi-influenced crust of DREAD 101 and SEE YOU IN HELL to the quick paced melodic punk of UNDERFIRE. All and all an excellent collection and introduction punk from a place all to often ignored. This effort is the result of the cooperation of about eleven Czech labels. (MT)
(Filip Fuch, Grohova 39, 602 00 Brno, CZECH REPUBLIC, orba@seznam.cz)

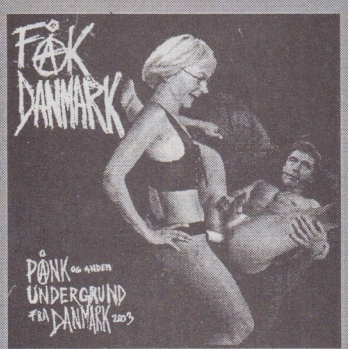
V/A – "Fåk Danmark—Pånk Og Anden Undergrund Fra Danmark 2003" 2xLP

Another in what seems to be a trend this month of compilations documenting vibrant punk scenes from around the world. A friend of mine has stated that this is most certainly one of the best eras to be involved in punk, and compilations like this help to drive the point home for sure. This lovely gatefold double LP— featuring a graphic image of the right-wing Prime Minister of Denmark, Anders Fogh, getting fucked up the ass with the aid of a strap-on by the leader of the equally right-wing Danish Peoples Party, Pia Kjaersgaard—contains 34 tracks of raw and beautifully inept Danish punk rock. It's like it's 1983 all over again, as bands like INCONTROLLADOS, GUDDOMMELIG GALSKAB, NO FUCKING TALENT, LOS RETARDOS, THE JERKING OFF JERKS, SCROTUM, FUCK LARS, SOREAZIS, FUK POLIC, THE WADERS and a slew of others blast through track after track









of amazing punk that goes from raw hardcore, to street punk, to *Killed By Death* style oddities to catchy pop-punk and everything in between. Comes with a 64 page booklet all in Danish which serves as both a zine about the current state of Danish punk, it's history and the current political situation in said nation and as a lyric booklet for the this masterpiece. Totally amazing stuff. (MT)
(naren@punks.org)

V/A – "It Came from Uranus" CD

First the obvious: *stupid* comp title kids. The music is pretty solid garage-punk (emphasis on the 'garage' in general) across the board; the lamer tracks just feel like tossoffs. However, there are the ever-present amazing tracks that pop up on every 21-band comp: BLEED, TYRADES, KA-NIVES, ALL-NIGHT MOVERS and a few others. Overall, good defeats evil…this time around. (RW)
(Pro-Vel, www.provelrecords.com)

V/A – "L.A. County Line" CD

A fine comp covering tons of different styles of punk rock, all from Los Angeles bands…29 in all. Personally, I'm not a huge fan of comps in the first place, but I would say if you want to check out a bunch of new bands from L.A., why not use this as comp. There are some fine bands on here. My favorites were probably the delightfully low energy REVOLVERS, the very SOCIAL DISTORTION-like BLACK MONDAY, and SET ASIDE. None of my favorite L.A. bands, like OUT OF VOGUE, or HIT ME BACK are on here, but I guess L.A. is pretty big and there's not room for everyone. (WR)
(Split Seven, 12405 Venice Blvd. #265, Los Angeles, CA 90066)

V/A – "Rebirth of Hardcore Pride" EP

Damn, few things annoy me as much as hearing bad covers of some of my favorite bands. Here we have three hardcore bands covering various songs by the almighty GORILLA BISCUITS. The bands on here are CLOSER THAN KIN, CITIZEN'S UNREST and FOR ALL ITS WORTH. And all the covers are really horrible. This is so bad it hurt! (RC)
(TCR Johnson, 14 Greene St., Pawtucket, RI 02860)

V/A – "Scorpion Death Rock" CD

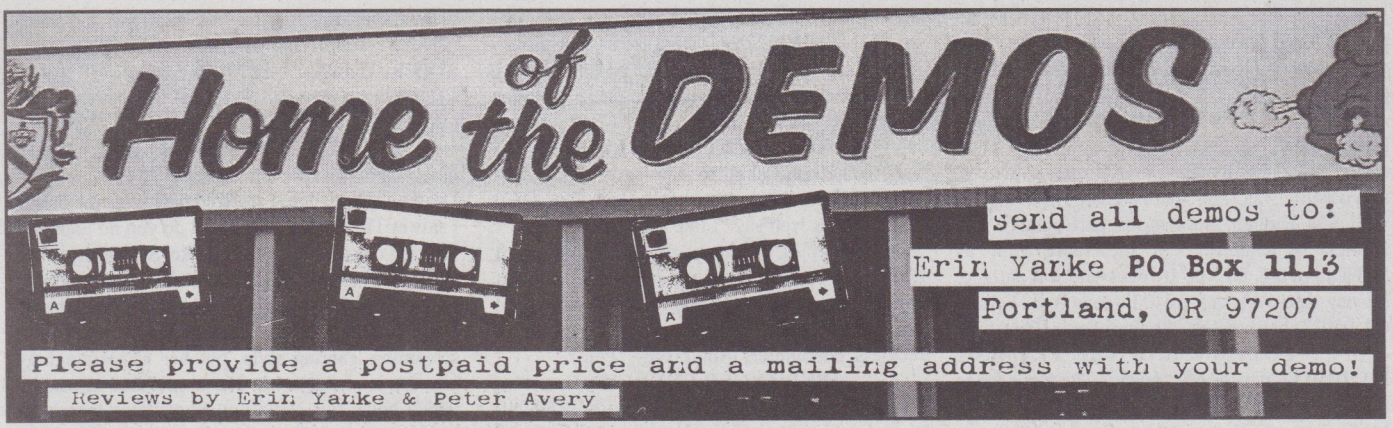
Scream House Records in Japan released this five-band compilation of some seriously scorching hardcore. YAKUSA LOVE, (893LOVE), 511, CHOKE, MAMUSI, and SET IT OFF all kick in two songs (MAMUSI with three—and of the five they are out of place with the crappy rock 'n' roll style with crooning lyrics (!)) each of super, super metallic, crusty-vocal, hardcore played to varying degrees of fucked up and intense in the way that only the Japanese seem to be able to accomplish. A Damn powerful recording makes all these bands—including MAMUSI—sound like they came from the ancient legends about gods who walked among people. Check it out for some new bands and huge production. (WM)
(Scream House)

V/A – "Tower 13" LP

Holy shit, this could be *Beach Blvd II* (for the uninitiated….an early 80s SoCal comp of classic "beach punk"). I'm a huge fan of Hostage records as they have carved a niche releasing stuff by loads of awesome SoCal bands made up of folks with creepers, short spikey hair and nautical star tattoos. If you like early SOCIAL DISTORTION and the STITCHES then this LP is so up your street. Not 1 stinker, although some tracks are better than others, this opened my eyes up to some fantastic new bands (DRIPS who bust out the best track on the album sounding like a way rough BODIES, FAKES, PEGS etc.) and a bunch of unreleased tracks by old favorites (SMOGTOWN, DISCONTENT, NEGATIVES, BROKEN BOTTLES)—not only is this a great sampler of Hostage bands, its also a solid listen from front to back. (TB)
(Hostage, PO Box 7736, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-7736)

V/A – "Victim of a Safety Pin—Polski Punk Underground 1977-82" LP

Most people, who know me, know of my insane obsession with Eastern European punk. It's really amazing that punk ever developed given the harsh reality and oppression of these Soviet Bloc nations—but under the harshest systems of repression, rebellion will take hold—and so a vibrant punk scene develops. Serving both as a refuge for political and cultural critique as well as good old fashion youthful rabble rousing, an underground do-it-yourself scene of tape trading, and illegal (and sometimes legal) concerts takes form. *Victim of a Safety Pin* is the first in, what is promised to be, a series of compilations, which document the history of this scene in Poland. For those who don't know, Poland's punk history reaches back just as far back as that of the more well known and documented Western Nations. Most of the names on this comp may be foreign to you, but upon taking a listen you cannot dispute the power of bands like DEUTER, REJESTRACJA, KRYZYS, DEZERTER (who are probably the most well known of these bands outside of Poland), TILT, DEADLOCK, BRAK, KSU (who began in 1977) NOCHE SZCZURY, TASS, TZN XENNA (one of my personal favorites), KULT, POE ROCKS or WALEK DZEDZEJ, especially upon reading the detailed 20 page, 15,000 word booklet. This document provides not only an in depth history's of each band featured, but also a well constructed history of rock and roll in Poland, and it's eventual evolution into punk—and how it all fits into the sociological, cultural, and political world around it. For those of you still having a hard time wrapping your brain around this, think of this as being a *Bloodstains Across Poland*, but infinitely more interesting. Seriously, I feel that this is one of the most interesting and crucial pieces of punk rock's forgotten history, and I recommend it most highly. (MT)
($12 ppd; 2185 Amity Dr., Sidney, BC, V8L 1B2, CANADA, kwiateczku@hotmail.com)



20 DOLLAR LOVE busts out a few hair metal tunes. Think AC/DC and MOTORHEAD. They've got a great singer who does the semi high pitched metal vocals quite well. There is something that is a bit punk about the music though. I'd have to say that 20DL is to the 80s as THE TIGHT BROS are to the 70s. It's worth checking out as the music is played very well. (3 song CD, no lyrics, www.20dollarlove.com) (Pete)

ALL AMERICAN is basically one guy playing punk rock. There is a full bands worth of instruments, so I assume he just doesn't do live shows. There is something very Sacramento about this. It's a minimalist recording on to 4-track. The guitars sound slightly out of tune at times and the songs are really basic three to four chord tunes. Somehow it all makes it better than if he tried to have some slick recording. Anyway it's basic punk with a hint of pop to some of the songs. Most of it is upbeat and somewhat catchy but after a while the songs tend to blend into one another. (16 song CD, w/ lyrics, jackvirginia@hotmail.com) (Pete)

BABY DRACULA takes your basic surf music premise, adds keyboards (which, for the most part, do the job you'd normally associate with guitar in a surf band, although they do have a guitarist), and puts in a moaning front man singing about 50s-era horror movie themes. Pretty slow to mid-tempo, and more fun than eerie. (5 song cassette, no lyrics included. 4113 NW 78 Terrace, Coral Springs, FL 33065.) (Erin)

BASTARD RADIO #2 is out, and has the same concept as *BR #1*, which was to distribute a "radio show," mixing up the genres to include some legitimate punk (SUICIDAL TENDENCIES, CIRCLE JERKS, DEFIANCE), total posers (TRANSPLANTS, RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE), metal (SEPULTURA), and rap (CYPRESS HILL). There is no DJ bantering, which makes this a mixed tape more than a radio show, but still, it serves a purpose. ($2 or mixed tape in trade. 28 song CD, no lyrics included. 2217 W. Lupine, Phoenix, AZ 85029.) (Erin)

BLACK BOX is a straightforward thrash band, with a vocalist who yells right in your face. There's a lot of energy here, ready to run you over. They keep the fast pace for the most part, but sometimes play a little slower; like enough to actually move your hips to instead of just nodding your head. ($4 ppd. 19 song CD, lyrics included. 1936 Sonoma Ave, Santa Rosa, CA 95403.) (Erin)

BLACK BOX have a butt full of short songs on their demo. Fast paced punk songs that are almost thrash. Maybe like a fast POISON IDEA. Musically, it is very basic three chord songs played at high speeds. I guess it includes the singer from MICKEY & THE BIG MOUTHS but I tend to think that this is a bit better. Once again there are a ton of bands that do this and there isn't much to set these guys apart but it's not bad. (19 song CD, w/ lyrics, www.laidofrecords.com) (Pete)

BLACKEN SPORK plays mid-tempo and mid-energy rock, with some forays into the reverb chamber. There's some catchiness, and the vocals are of a well-enunciated singing style, and for the most part melodic. ($3 ppd. 7 song CD, lyrics included. 240 Winona Ave., Washington, PA 15301.) (Erin)

COLLAPSE has put out a short demo. They play heavy hardcore that borders on grind. All songs clock in at about 2 minutes and generally mix up blast beats with slow mosh parts. The drummer uses the double bass pretty liberally, the guitarist uses a lot a chugga and all vocalists really belt it out. (4 song CD, with lyrics, 7710 West 130th St., Middleburg Heights, OH 44130, collapseoath.com) (Pete)

COUNTY Z and **SHEP AND ME** split up this demo. COUNTY Z rocks it in their SUBMISSION HOLD/THE EX way for one song, and then has a noise jam out that sounds like it could have been a Shimmy Disc release. SHEP AND ME have energy of a hoedown, like a country western JACK-O-FIRE, lo fi and DIY all the way. ($3 ppd. 5 song cassette, 2 CZ and 3 SaM. No lyrics included, though. PO Box 52096, New Orleans, LA 70152.) (Erin)

DEAD SET AGAINST plays guitar-driven, classic mid-paced hardcore with mostly shouted vocals, while sometimes pumping up the aggro by increasing the pace, adding the yelling dude group back-up vocals, and also foraging into the mosh world. Pretty solid. ($3 ppd. US, $5 World. 6 song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 952, Grover Beach, CA 93483.) (Erin)

DISCLOSE is a kick-ass Japanese band, playing lurching, tight DISCHARGE style that, well, blows me away. Of course, these guys appear all over the rest of the magazine, but here's your chance to mail order a cassette, just like in the olden days. ($3 ppd. 4 song cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 3400, Wallington, NJ 07057.) (Erin)

FAREWELL HOPE seems to have it together pretty well. They play thrashy hardcore with a hint of emo, as the band name would suggest. Something like a straight edge version of NEIL PERRY. Yea, that's a stretch but oh well. Hardcore that is metalish at times and has softer spoken parts but is generally a hectic mess of fast screaming. Pretty well played and with enough hooks to be interesting. (4 song CD, w/ lyrics, 926 Martin Rd., Baltimore, MD 21221, www.farewellhope.com) (Pete)

GAMA BOMB is a pretty normal metal band. I guess they sound kind of like ANTHRAX, but don't trust me, as it's been a long time. Galloping guitar parts, plenty of wanking and vocals that just don't hit high notes, as I would like them to. Not bad but really average. (2 song CD, no lyrics, 14 Cherry Hill, Rostrevor, Co. Down, N. Ireland, BT34 3BD, gamabomb.tk) (Pete)

IMPRACTICAL COCKPIT has changed styles again, coming from a MINUTEMEN sound to something more like THE FALL. Now, with their mostly slow pacing, bass and guitar that dance while electric drums hold down the fort, and lo-fi recording, they capture sort of really early PINK FLOYD style, with vocals that are full of angst and also hardly there. Post punk, again, and again tearing down walls. It's great to respond to challenges (their amazing drummer got hit by a car this year and was faced with the possibility of not playing drums again) with creativity instead of by giving up and giving in. Here's to you, my friends. ($3 ppd. It's hard to tell how many songs are included on this cassette, but a lot, that's for damn sure. No lyrics included, though. PO Box 52096, New Orleans, LA 70152.) (Erin)

The guys in **IT'S (JUST) BLOOD, BABY** all have silly punk names. I think they still call this '77 style punk. Early SWINGIN' UTTERS meets the RAMONES. Mid to up tempo songs, basic three chord stuff and snotty vocals. It's played pretty well for a demo.(7 song CD, w/ lyrics, www.itsjustbloodbaby.com) (Pete)

KISS THE FIST is a punk cheer squad. No music, just hand claps, foot stomps, singing and cheering. Most of the songs are about partying and what not. It's actually really cute for a couple of minutes. I guess the CD is supposed to do extra stuff like videos and what not but my computer is old. (8 song CD plus videos, no lyrics, 1811 N St. #8, Sacramento, CA 95814, kthefist@yahoo.com) (Pete)

LES JOLIES SALOPES CD comes with *Toilet Paper Fanzin*e but I only got the CD. They are a French pop punk band. The music is pretty sloppy with basic mid tempo pop songs. There is a mix of male and female vocals. They do some cover songs including the much over done "Gigantic" (not even one of the better PIX-

IES songs, just easy to play). (15 song CD, no lyrics, You'll have to find the address for *Toilet Paper* Fanzine because it is not on the CD.) (Pete)

LIGHTS OUT has a great 6 song cassette. I think Spencer told me they were good once, but you usually can't trust Spencer. Anyway, he was right. Thrashy, high speed punk with just enough slow mosh parts and a fair amount of chanting. In the same vein as SCHOLASTIC DETH. It rocks and it's on tape. (6 song tape, w/ lyrics, 1040 Laguna Ave., Felton, CA 95018, hardxtimes@hotmail.com) (Pete)

LOJAQUE AND THE FLAMING NAHDBITS play goofy...music? The punk songs sound somewhat similar to THE DEAD MILKMEN, I guess. That accounts for about three or four of the seven songs. The others are bad attempts at playing funk or something like that. It might be funny to see live but if it is, that all gets lost on CD. I like jokes and all, but there are a couple times when the jokes cross the line and just become crude and offensive. (7 song CD, no lyrics, lemonjelloj@yahoo.com) (Pete)

ME INFECTO play a very NIRVANA-influenced style of rock. They make use of only bass and drums, well with some other random noisemakers at times. I must admit that they generally do a good job of getting by without guitars, in fact you don't even notice it most of the time. The songs are pretty catchy (again very NIRVANA, especially in the limited vocals). There is a hint of some SHELLAC influence every once in a while. (12 song CD, with lyrics, meinfecto.com) (Pete)

NO REFLECTION LEFT plays quality thrash punk, with elements of the ANGRY SAMOANS as well, like they're having fun, but also in the vocal tone. They totally bust out even faster occasionally, and those times the vocals are more of the spoken ranting style. They also do a cover of 7 SECONDS "Young 'Til I Die." Yeehaw! ($3 ppd. 8 songs on cassette or CD, which ever you prefer, with lyrics included no matter what the format! 3 Rue de la Ferme Quincampoix, 91600 Savigny-Sur-Orge, France.) (Erin)

PACK OF VIPERS play emoish hardcore in the style of SHOTMAKER meets URANUS. Driving but not always fast. The first song is more SHOTMAKER; the next three are more URANUS. The vocals are a bit hoarse and forced. The music has somewhat of a metal edge at times. It's heavy; it's very mid 90s. (4 song CD, with lyrics, 680 Brooks Rd., W. Henrietta, NY 14586, packofvipers@yahoo.com) (Pete)

PINK FEVER is acoustic one-man band style; sometimes sounding like a drug induced dream/nightmare, and sometimes just sort of English pop. ($3 ppd. 11 song cassette, lyrics included, but in damn small print. PO Box 52096, New Orleans, LA 70152.) (Erin)

RANDOM AXE OF TERROR is a thrash spectacle, with lots of cymbals and crazy guitar while this guy screams over it all, but without the sadness of the emo screamers. There's some groove to this, and a certain production sound that NEGATIVE TREND had, but mostly it's just straightforward rage. ($2 ppd. or trade. 6 song cassette, lyrics included. 13133 Klinger, Detroit, MI 48212.) (Erin)

THE RECKLESS DEERHUNTERS play something akin to the early DESCENDENTS. They have some really fast joke songs that might as well say "I like food, food is good." The majority of the songs are up-tempo, poppy (but more punkish than pop-punk), and include some cheesy wanking guitar solos. Nothing new but it ain't all that bad. (13 song CD, no lyrics, reckless_deerhunters.tripod.com) (Pete)

RED TYGER CHURCH take a lot of inspiration from the VELVET UNDERGROUND and other New York pre-pre-punk bands, with elements of what can only be heard now as classic rock. Basic instrumentation, and slow tempo-ed (especially to you thrash hounds!) with mostly male sung vocals and female harmonies. ($2 ppd. 6 song cassette, no lyrics included. 504 26th St., Sacramento, CA 95816.) (Erin)

Once again I've come across another CD by **THE RISE AND SHINE BAND**. Again, I say they need to spend less time recording and more time writing songs. It's really poorly played RAMONES style songs. I guess it's cool for friends of the band. (6 song CD the last is just 15 min. of them screwing around, w/ lyrics, 6605 Capitol Hill, Arlington, TX 76017, riseandshine@perplexapon.com) (Pete)

STANDING 69'S play pretty basic punk. Most of the songs are in the style of the RAMONES or the MISFITS. The first song is pretty catchy, with hand claps and all. It's by far their best, but I'm not sure what to make of, "All that time I thought you were mine. I got another twenty-dollar bill, now your mine." So you are calling her a whore, but then you want to be with her anyway. Well the music isn't played so poorly but you've heard it before. (7 song CD, no lyrics, 16919 Laverne Ave., Cleveland Ohio, 44135, standing69s@yahoo.com) (Pete)

SUPERSTRINGS FOR SUPERFRIENDS probably wouldn't get a regular review in *MRR*, but what the hell. They have sent me two CDs and I'm just going to do both in one here. Their first one, "Fantastimo" is maybe the better of the two. It's very much in the vein of what was passing as emo in the late 90s in the Midwest. Something like an amateur version of early BRAID meets the more odd SWEATER WEATHER. The second CD, "You're Next" is a bit more straightforward. The slightly heavy sound of early BRAID meets the wussier sound of later BRAID meets the even wussier sound of AMERICAN FOOTBALL. (7 and 4 song CDs, no lyrics, sfsmusic.com) (Pete)

ROCK THE LIGHT is pretty much about rock, straightforward tempos, fancy guitar stuff (relatively), and even a dude playing tambourine. This is totally solid, and then there's the guy singing while being snotty and moaning in all the right places. They also start out with the earlier songs being more early rock, and get more into the extravagances of 70s rock (shall we say) then get more simple like the 90s (song #8 is total SUPERCHUNK). Like a time warp. (12 song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 705, Sacramento, CA 95802.) (Erin)

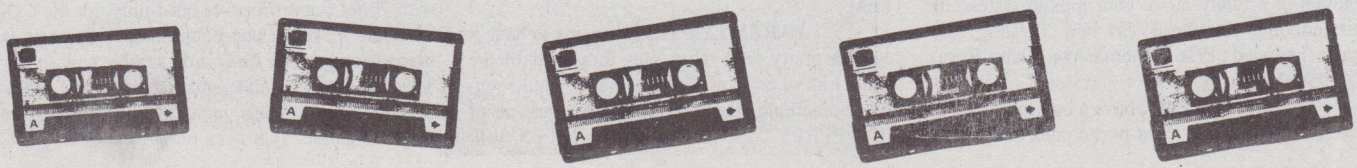
SCAB PARTY. Stupid story: These guys sound just like a band I saw at The Fuckpit. Dead on. Then, duh, I realized they were the band I saw at The Fuckpit. That will do you no good in figuring out what they sound like. So, for those of you that weren't there, they are a mid-tempo poppy band that keeps it pretty simple. The singer has a good mix of styles, and sings with a lot of screaming, ranting style, but her actual singing hits the low end a lot. It's a cool and unusual, which helps this stand out. Sometimes there's a banjo going on in here, too, but not very often. ($2 ppd. 17 song cassette, no lyrics included. PO Box 260, Corvallis, OR 97339.) (Erin)

SLEEPER CELL, at first impression, sounds like if ECONOCHRIST was more thrashy and has a higher pitched Ben for the vocals. But then there are more of the guitars of the spiky punk sound going on, and then they lurch into tiny moments of chaos. They bring it all together well, meaning that they still have a common denominator of sound happening. I like this a lot. ($2 ppd. or trade. 7 song cassette, lyrics included. 185 Endicott St. #5, Boston, MA 02113.) (Erin)

SUNSHINE SMILE plays easy-to-go-wild-to, fast and driving punk rock—emphasis on the rock. The vocals sound like a combination of the woman from AREA 51 and Ivy (LOS CANADIANS, ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT, etc.) and I think that's a good analogy to continue. A mix of one of those "I don't give a fuck" rock bands from Seattle, and the region rock of the south. This is a keeper! (8 song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 705, Sacramento, CA 95802.) (Erin)

Split demo between **TERMINAL YOUTH** and **THE WORMS.** TERMINAL YOUTH have the metal edge going on with their hardcore, brutally paced, occasionally slowing it down enough to have the circle pit go into normal agitate mode, instead of just the spin cycle. It's kind of hard to hear what's going on, but what you can hear rips. THE WORMS are also hard to hear, but it sounds like the classic fast paced thrash/mosh combination with a screamer (top-of-the-throat, high-pitched style) out front totally feeling it. (6 songs by TY, 3 by TW, no lyrics included. 15 Locust Rd., Ipswich, MA 01938.) (Erin)

THIEVES are showing their love for BLACK SABBATH and even some HENDRIX here, with slow sludgy bass lines leading the way for the headbanging pace of the drums. The vocals are more of the actual evil screaming kind, but that still doesn't take away from the early metal tribute they've got going on. ($3 ppd. 7 songs on the recorded side of the cassette, and a whole bunch on the live side. Lyrics included. PO Box 52096, New Orleans, LA 70152.) (Erin)



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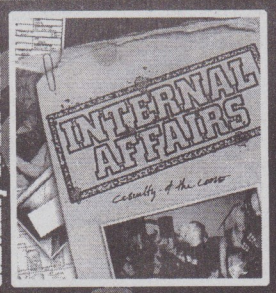

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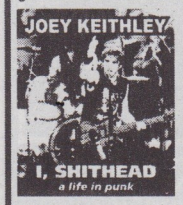

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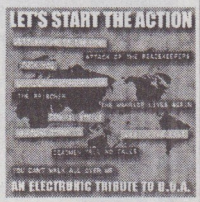

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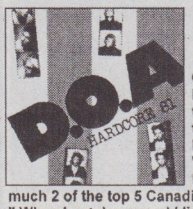

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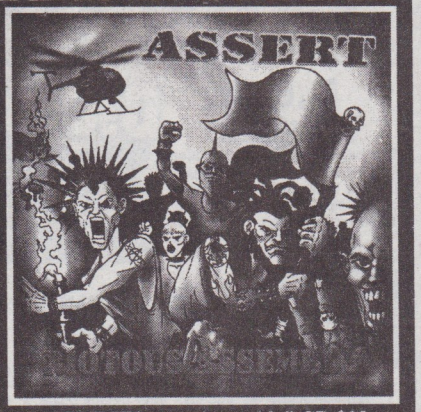

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ZINES

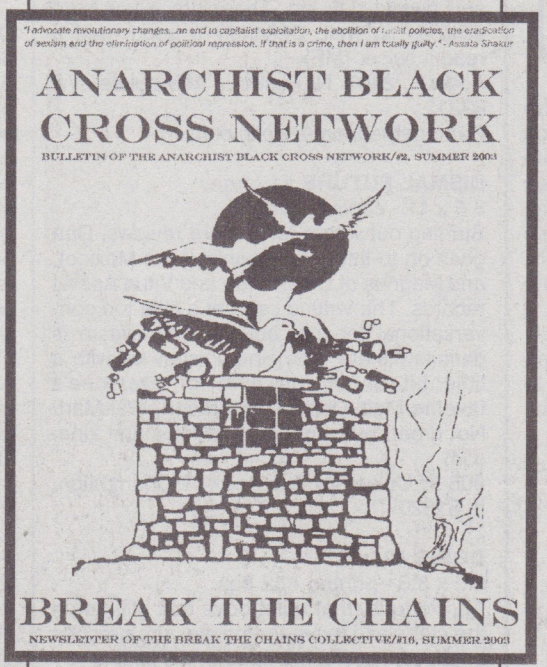
Reviews by: (AC) Arwen Curry, (AR) Aragorn, (JB) Julia Booz Ullrey, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (BD) Ben Ditch, (SD) Sara Double-Ears, (MF) Maree Faygo, (JH) Jeff Heermann, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (CJ) Chloe Jensen, (JM) Jeff Mason, (MN) Mimi Nguyen, (CR) Casey Ress, (MT) Mike Thorn, (GZ) Gordon Zola.

Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS NETWORK BULLETIN #2 / $4
8.5 x 10 - printed - 48 pgs
This is a shared publication with *Break the Chains*, an energetic prisoner support group out of Eugene, OR. Coupling the vitality of *Break the Chains* and the thoroughness of the *Anarchist Black Cross Network Bulletin,* this magazine provides most of the information you would want to start a prisoner support project. Names, dates, and updates of current "political" prisoners are coupled with updates of the work that the network is currently involved in. There are some essays by current and former prisoners, some self-criticism of the network, and an emphasis on the work and prisoners from the Northwest. The content couples both the generalized guilt-based approach of most prisoner support groups with enough lowest-common-denominator analysis to scare all but the most determined activists away from this type of work. The most refreshing commentary comes from Craig "Critter" Marshall and his "Solidarity Means Attack" where he clearly states that "Talking about supporting sabotage... just isn't going to cut it... it's about the fact that if we all don't start doing something soon we are all fucked." (AR)
BTC / PO Box 11331 / Eugene OR 97440

ARTCORE #19 / £1.50 UK / $4 world
8.5 x 11.75 - printed - 36 pgs
Around since 1986, Welly has constantly cranked out one of the more consistently good punk zines from the UK. Keeping one foot in the present—by featuring interviews with End On End, Epoxies, Shatterhand, Freaks Union, Steel Rules Die—and one in the past—with articles about the Avengers, Th'Inbred, Offenders, Canada's Subhumans and X-Claim! Records—Welly and his gaggle of writers display a good sense of knowledge and passion for this silly little thing called punk rock. Top notch as always. (MT)
#1 Aberdulais Rd / Gabalfa Cardiff / CF14 2PH Wales / United Kingdom
artcore@ntlworld.com

BALD CACTUS #21 / 50p or $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
Well I'd say that any zine that has show reviews that end with an assessment of punk points for the band/show is generally damned hilarious and light-hearted. Fine by me. No Choice interview, The Mingers, Pilger, "top 10 disgusting things (me and) my friends have done" list, reviews, etc. My fave would be Andy the Anarchist's rants and raves on such topics as "Kids With Backpacks," "Smutty Place Names," "Greek Pigs Caught On Film," and "Pigshit Bastards."
(JB)
Andy Cactus / c/o 145-149 Cardigan Road Leeds, W. Yorks / LS6 1LJ England
Baldcactus@ntlworld.com



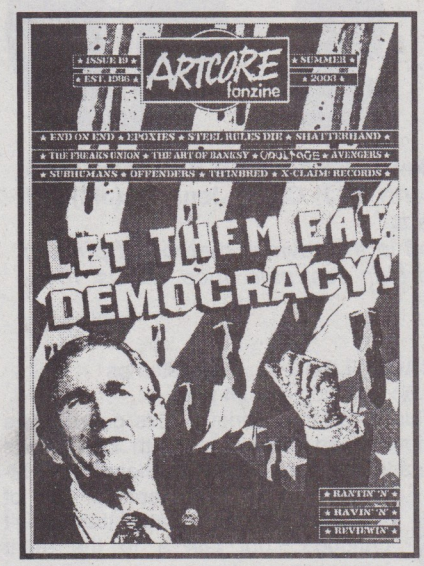
CTRL ALT DLT #1 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 16 pgs
Version 1: Boring tour report, pathetic navel-gazing, and sappy girlfriend story. Version 2: First-time zine that should have stayed in the friendship circle, as there is about as much need for another sad-boy-who-likes-punk-rock story as there is for another American action movie. Version 3: Mission burritos make out-of-towners sick to their stomach because they force themselves to eat as many as they have meals while they are visiting town. (AR)
2407 N Pierce St. / Milwaukee, WI 53212

CASH FLAGG #1 / send stamps
8.5 x 11 - copied - 24 pgs
This is fucking hilarious. This guy reviews movies and ranks them with Don Knotts heads (the more Don Knotts heads, the better the movie). These are the kind of reviews I can appreciate—they aren't "critiques," but just a to the point description your average movie-goer can enjoy, plus he includes bad quotes from dialogue and isn't afraid to trash where trashin' is due. Brian appreciates the (unintentional) humor of Arnold Schwartzenegger, loved *28 Days Later*, pokes fun at *2 Fast 2 Furious*, is sick of people calling metal "hardcore" and was let down by the anthrax scare because only a few people died. Right on! Oh yeah, and the cover has a picture of him (I assume) holding up a sign that says "Nuke Miami. It blows." I would definitely give this five Don Knotts. (MD)
Brian Marshall / 258 Main St Apt #3 / Danbury, CT 06810
cashflagg13@hotmail.com

CITY ROCKERS #1 / $3
24 x 18 - printed - 8 pgs - Spanish
This zine is more in the style of a newspaper that hammers home the hardcore punk style. Definitely a good read about the scene in South America with lots of contact addresses. This first edition has interviews with the bands Argy Bargy, Broken Bones, and Katarro Vandalico. There are also record reviews, some really cool ads, and a few columns devoted to what's happening. This paper is worth checking out, especially if one has any interest in the Latin American scene. (HH)
Cailla de Correo N.8 / Sucursal 3 / CP 3000, Santa Fe / Argentina
cityrocker79@hotmail.com

COMMUNICATING VESSELS Vol. 1 No. 10 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 52 pgs
This publication used to be more obviously influenced by the surrealists, from whom its name was lifted. This issue takes more of an influence from *Black and Red* press and the American insurrectionary position. No harm there, as the translation work being done, and the legacy of *Black and Red* are two of the most inspirational projects to come out of the North American anarchist "intelligentsia" in the past 30 years. This

magazine has some great reprints (Moral Disorder by Gilles Dauve, Up Shi'ite Creek by Wildcat (UK), In a Schoolroom by I.R.



Ybarra, etc) but really shines with the author's own writings. The authors take on the war protests was biting and appropriate (and this is from someone who attended San Francisco's "M20") when he said "The anti-Iraq war movement proved to be an eclectic mix of liberalism, anarchist ideals, tactics, and even in places, very passionate resistance, but… the reality remain that: it was, in most cases, not calling the whole social set-up into question." This is recommended as a less alienating introduction to many of these ideas than some of the source material. (AR)
PO Box 1124 / Madison WI 53701-1124

CRACKS IN THE WALL #4 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 28 pgs
I'd been wondering where the wingnuts had picked to be their new hub: Wilbraham, MA seems to be it. *CITW* kept me distracted as I rode the 21 Hayes bus from Embarcadero to Scott Street. Albeit idly, from the screaming children and cell phone maniacs on their way home to suck up some greasy food and watch a little TV; exactly the portion of the population writer Andy portrays in his long-winded parable. Check it out, this young dude graduates from high school and runs away from home to live under a bridge, where he faces his mortality through a comrade's death. Then he wanders into some town, pops some pills, turns into a human lizard, and turns the rest of the world into ant people through his sheer cerebral awareness. Sheesh! I won't give away the ending. It reminds me of *Write the Way Up* by Dick Lucas, but it's not as good. (SD)
Andy / 2 Tinkham Glenn / Wilbraham, MA 01095

DEATH BY ROBOT #1 / $1 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 10 pgs
This is a very personal zine that I actually enjoyed reading. *Death by Robot* is made by a woman named Addie who is a really great writer. Content consists of an argument, love, a page that reveals who she is, and day to day life. There are a few cute pictures as well. Definitely a good read, I read it twice. (MF)
Addie / 2407 N Pierce / Milwaukee, WI 53212
Ramonathebrave@ziplip.com

DISMAL FUTURE #1 / free
8.5 x 11 - copied - 4 pgs
Starting out with a few record reviews, Dan goes on to interview Agonía (from Mexico), and Magnus of Ulcerrhoea and Vitun Äpärät records. The writing can get a little too conversational for me, but the enthusiasm is definitely there. The zine finishes off with a little bit about the evils of everyone's favorite Multi-Death Corporation, Wal-Mart. Not great, but a good effort for a first zine. (CJ)
605 W University Ave Apt #1 / Champaign, IL 61820

DORIS #21 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - printed - 32 pgs
Ah, Fortune, that quiet dove that alights on the steps as I leave the house, she perches briefly and cocks her head at me as if to say "this visit will leave you ever so much happier and content than you could have guessed." Finding *Doris* in my review box put a grin on my grill and elicited a bubbling laugh from my lips, as I had spent the bus ride home the last two nights already poring over the new issue. Number 21 is the "G, H, I" issue of the encyclopedia set. Girl Gangs, How to Numb Yourself, Hell, Guatemala, Gender, and I Wanna are the topics that find themselves in this issue. I recently realized what purpose abuse stories serve in the zine format. I used to feel so uncomfortable reading about it and didn't understand why anyone would talk about abuse to people that they didn't know. Cindy has addressed abuse before now and will again; in "Hell" she describes the effects of sexual trauma and how she has worked through it, along with challenging the notion that those who have not experienced abuse should not have to deal with it. (I also appreciate that she heads the section with a warning: "This next part has descriptions of abuse, you might not want to read it." And even "If you think it might trigger stuff for you, please make sure you are someplace ok before you read it." Wisdom that should be ubiquitous but totally fucking isn't.) I have come to understand that silence about abuse breeds shame, which in turn creates isolation and no healing. Don't count on my oversimplification though—read *Doris*. The other parts of the encyclopedia are as cute (comix) and inspiring as always, being that artfulness and inclusiveness are what define Doris from the rest. (JB)
Cindy / PO Box 1734 / Asheville, NC 28802

DURGA #? / $1 / trade
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 32 pgs
As an immigrant myself, I found the first part of this zine, "Immigration and Assimilation" especially interesting and relevant. Coming from a different background than your average American definitely colors the rest of the zine as well, although not always directly. The focus is mostly political, but from a personal stand point, i.e.; How political issues affect the writer's personal life and opinions, and looking at day-to-day life from a more political perspective. The zine is almost all text, and covers a wide range of topics from growing up in America to feminism and punk rock. In a world of shitty personal zines, it's nice to know that there are still some people with something worth saying. (BD)
PO Box 5841 / Eugene. OR 97405

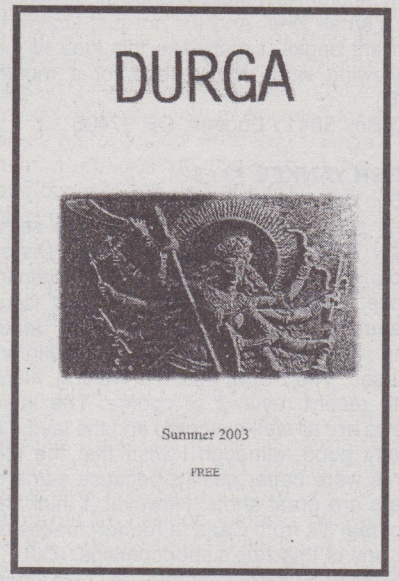
FORK, KNIFE & SPOON #? / free?
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs
It seems like this effort was a long time coming for the editor and she wanted to just get it out. Unfortunately this prevalent attitude with zines ends up creating a result that feels rushed and scrappy and with no cohesive element. Maybe I just feel that way because of the brevity. Still, this zine has something to contribute. There is an interview with Crucial Unit, show reviews of Libertatia 2003 and I Love A Parade, as well as some blurbs on the W.T.O. protests in Cancun, Valium, and the end of Mission Records, plus a vegan recipe to "tie it all in." Then you got the music and book reviews. Maybe the next issue will develop more of a voice. (JB)
Katrina M / pygmyhippo666@hotmail.com

FORME LETALE #5 / $2
8 x 6 - copied - 24 pgs - French
This is an anarchopunk zine that consists of two interviews, one with the band Foetus Party, and the other with the zine *Plus Rein.* There are also a few record reviews. This zine may be small, but actually there is quite a bit to read, and in French that is always a plus. Le punk c'est la guerre! (HH)
12 allee des Saules / 59890 Quesnoy sur Deule / France formeletale@chez.com

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH #1 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 38 pgs
Caitlin went all out for the first issue of *For What It's Worth.* A cut and paste zine with collage backgrounds. This is jam packed with book reviews, an interview with Q and Not U, and an awesome article about working at an HIV/AIDS clinic in Albany, NY. There is also an article called "Advertising is a Culture," which contains statistics, past and present, along with facts on how advertising affects our everyday lives. Overall, this is a pretty great zine, although I must say that the photo shoot of David Waite was a couple of pages too long. Definitely worth a buck to find out Vanilla Ice's favorite color. (MF)
Caitlin Radano / 25 Tamarac Ridge
Shelton, CT 06484
Spitshine_nickels@hotmail.com

HAMBURGER EYES #5 / $5
11 x 11 - printed - 76 pgs
It's hard to call a slick production like this a zine, but I guess it kind of is. Really it's more of a photo journal that according to the subtitle represents, "the continuing story of life on earth." It does fill its pages with some pretty great black and white photographs from around the world including Cuba, Japan, and San Francisco. Photographs by, Angela Boatwright, Boogie, Catherine Brooks, Danny Murillo, Dave Engle, Dave Schubert Dylan Doubt, Isaac McKay-Randozzi, Jamie Rosenthal, Mark Geil, Mr. Mike, Ped Urtz, Ray Potes, Rob Collinson, Stefan Simikich, Tobin Yelland, and Ye Rin Mok. (CR)
Burgerworld / PO Box 30 / 2966 24th St.
San Francisco, CA 92110
www.hamburgereyes.com

HAZARDOUS WASTE #3 / send stamp
8.5 x 11 - copied - 4 pgs
Dense, short and not-quite shocking, but cheap fun all the same. The editorial policy at work here is that *Hazardous Waste* is that it's supposed to be the journalistic equivalent of a 10-song hardcore 7", which by extension would mean that *MRR* is the *Jesus Christ Superstar* soundtrack played at half normal speed. You got your page of record reviews (things like Severed Head of State, a lotta Disclose, Born Dead Icons, etc.), some stuff about the old cable access show *Why Be Something You're Not,* a speedy interview with Sleeper Society, and some pro-crusty commentary from the editor/publisher. (JH)
Matt Smith / 210 Dewey St. #3
Worcester, MA 01610
xearthcitizenx@yahoo.com



IMPACT PRESS #46 / $2
8.5 x 11 - printed - 64 pgs
This milk-hatin' (but otherwise liberal), free (in person) news-n-analysis zine always has a few great articles that make it worth picking up. This issue features photographs and a first hand report (from a US journalist) about the maquillas of Tijuana, an expose on bullfighting, a look at immigrant farm (tomato) workers organizing in Florida, and some shorter columns on white privilege and British vs. American media. There are plenty of advertisements for music and vegan clothing, a long (in tiny print) music "review" section (stuff they don't like gets a neutral description, and they like a lot of stuff—thus advertisers pay and they can afford to give the zine away), and some more writing from a leftist perspective. (JM)
PMB 361 / 10151 University Blvd / Orlando, FL 32817 / www.impactpress.com

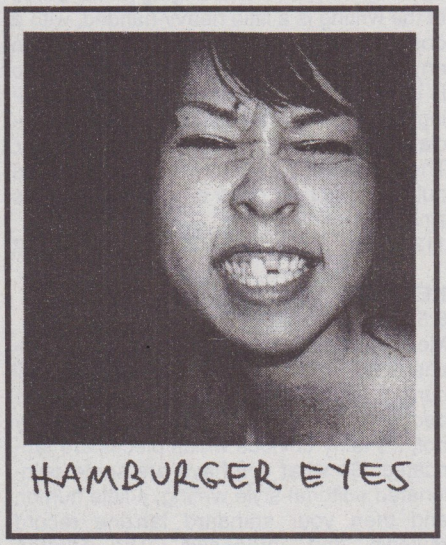
JADED HIPSTERS DRINK WHISKEY SOURS #1 / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 40 pgs
Brought to you by the author *The Urban Hermitt,* this collection of short stories revolve around drinking, homophobia, transphobia, racism, and the ignorance of those numbskulls who think that putting on a "conscious hip-hop" album some how erases your privilege and excuses your racism. Most of the stories are told from a pretty deeply personal level and get into some intimate and challenging ideas. Some of the writing is a little heavy-handed, with a dose of self-righteousness, but more than anything else, I have to respect anyone who is involved in the world of punk who is willing to bring trans issues to the table, especially when it's done in such a personal way. There's not a lot of transsexual zinesters out there, but he does a good job with his zine. (CR)
112 E. Pike Street #910 / Seattle, WA 98122

KEEPSCHTUMM #7 / $1.50
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 18 pgs
Most of this zine seems to be tongue-in-cheek faux news pieces mixed in with real current events. It's left up to the reader to decide what is true and what isn't, but worry not, it's fairly obvious which pieces are fabricated. So what you have are some opinionated editorial-style writing, a little humor, and then your standard fanzine record reviews and interviews. The Clutton Brothers, Pigfish, Lost Cherrees, and Gee Vaucher—the legendary artist responsible for, among other things the instantly recognizable Crass artwork—are all given a page or two to let us know what they're all about. Everything has an anarcho/peace punk edge to it, from the reviews to who they decided to interview and the topics that are covered. Fight war not wars! (BD)
33 Henry Taylor St / Fflint / Fflintshire / CH6 5PP / Wales / United Kingdom

LEFT BACK #1 / $2 / free to prisoners
5.5 x 8 - copied - 40 pgs
The editor is locked up and is using his zine to express some of what he's feeling and learning, like his reflections on drugs and alienation. Anthony Rayson writes on the internal and externalized rottenness of America, and a number of pieces are reprinted courtesy of Jacob David, Crimethinc, and the *Cleveland Plain Dealer.* Neil of *Wiener Society* is interviewed, and the *Society*'s influence on *Left Back* is apparent. Use of a dictionary and more practice as a writer would help the editor express himself more pointedly and powerfully. His address is: Chadd Beverlin #424-439 / c/o N.C.C.I. / PO Box 1218 / Marion, OH 43301, but please use the address below for ordering the zine. (JM)
Fanorama / 109 Arnold Ave / Cranston, RI 02905

LIBER PPPHHHTTTHHHHPPPTT / $3
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 80 pgs
The first thing you notice upon opening this book is a small white pill in a plastic bag stapled to the inside of the front cover. On

the facing page are the words, "If pressed to reveal the existence of this book to any outsider, 1 cyanide pill has been included for your discrete (sic) consumption." Turn the page and you are confronted with a veritable Bible of Chaoism (Chaosism?), complete with fables, dogma, and the appropriate amount of indoctrination. Of course, this is all done in the spirit of Chaos, meaning that much of it just made me wanna scratch my head and go, "huh?" Graphically it's very strong, albeit confusing. I still can't tell



whether this is an elaborately executed inside joke or some person's life's work. Either way, it's pretty impressive in its absurd wackiness. (CJ)
Gingerbread Man Press / 461 Washington St / Eugene, OR 97401

MANUFACTURING DISSENT? / $5
5.5 x 8 - copied - 52 pgs
Subtitled *Prison Writings of Rob Los Ricos*, the author comes out swinging against liberals, professional activists, people with jobs (imprisoned writers are entitled to an occasional five spot), class war anarchists, and civilization ("a global death camp"). He is strongly in favor of stealing, rioting, walks in the woods, homebrew, and chaos. It seems that only "an enemy of humanity" would have the five bucks to send in for this here, unless this useless green paper is liberated from an employed person during an insurrectionary riot. In the future Rob dreams of, most people reading this (and quite a few others) will be dead. Supposedly, those remaining will have "permanently eradicated oppression" ("primitive" people never fought, he assumes) and will enjoy a spirited dance on your grave. Whatever it takes? (JM)
APLAN / 818 SW 3rd Ave / PMB 354 Portland, OR 97204

MISHAP #15 / $1 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
Yes this zine is mostly fiction, with bits of political commentary. But that is not why you should read it. You should read it for the book reviews. This kid reads like a zillion books a month. Well informed, articulate, and helpful—seriously, a good small section in a small zine. And it's not just limited to current books. I really like this idea of just reviewing what you've read for a month. (SD)
PO Box 5841 / Eugene, OR 97405

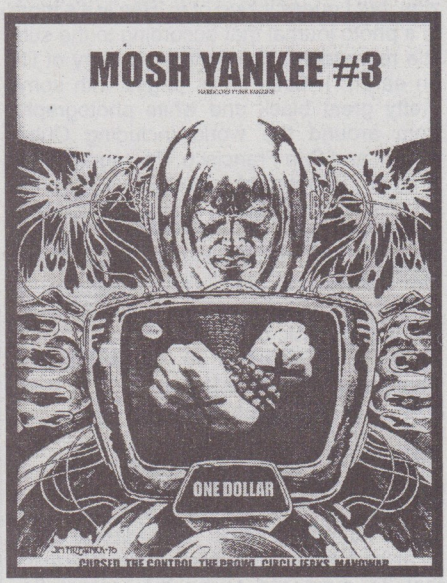
MOSH YANKEE #3 / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 32 pgs
This zine is brought to you by the same crew that does the Equalizing-X-Distort radio show and zine. Like EXD, its primary focus is hardcore punk music; this issue features interviews with the Circle Jerks, The Great American Steak Religion, Cursed, The Prowl, and The Control, along with record reviews of course. The interviews are all well-executed and the layout is pretty good, although I wish that the pictures were better quality, because some of them are great shots. However, I think the fact that it's from Canada (dude!) makes up for any of this zine's shortcomings. (CJ)
2 Stewart St #202 / Toronto, ON / M5V 1H6 Canada

NEWS FROM NOWHERE #3 / free / postage
11 x 14 - printed - 8 pgs
While it is possible to scan pictures into a computer and transfer them onto a paper medium, it is a path wrought with peril. This zine demonstrates the ruins of such a journey, with the added humiliation that the actual title of the paper shows the ill effects of digitalization. This magazine exists as a sort of limp reaction to the *Green Anarchist* paper that also comes from the same town. Its focus is stated as being in the trajectory of Kropotkin's Mutual Aid, cooperation (whatever that means), the green movement, and with the goal of the creation of a world with "A rational approach to agriculture, transport, and production..." This would be in contrast to an anti-civilization and insurrectionary perspective of GA. The contents include some Anti-WTO cheerleading, some poetry, a piece on gardening (pro), sexism in the movement (con), and an obligatory rant against the "ideology" of the motorcar. News flash! Cars are bad! More at 11. (AR)
PO Box 10384 / Eugene, OR 97440

PEARSHAPED #5 / $2 / ¥200 / £1.50
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 34 pgs
It's not every day that you find a completely bilingual zine, but *Pearshaped* is just that: every article that appears here in English also appears in Japanese. I think that's pretty fuckin' rad, even if all of the articles aren't specifically my cup of tea. You see, this isn't really a punk zine. Aside from a couple record reviews, most of the content is more in the personal/feminist zine tradition—articles on a feminist hip hop collective and women who skateboard are interspersed with pieces on fashion, bars, and belly dancing. If these things sound interesting to you, you'll probably like this zine. Bonus points for pretty colored paper and yarn binding. (CJ)
764 Page St. #3 / San Francisco, CA 94117
pearshapedzine@yahoo.dk

PROPAGANDA #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 28 pgs
There seem to be a lot of zines out of the UK like this one: columns, a small subset of culture as a directive (skateboarding in this one), then big name filler in the hopes of getting people to pick it up (interviews with Mike Park and Guy Picciotto). But something about *Prop g* is odd; the tone. Somehow I just don't believe that some 15 year old kid is writing this thing. Take it as a compliment or take it as a dis. (SD)
PO Box 2837 / Calverton / NG14 6WU / England / United Kingdom

RANCID NEWS #3 / £1, $4
8.5 x 11 - offset - 68 pgs.
A slick-lookin' color cover wraps itself around the grubbiest newsprint this side of *The Contra Costa County Super Saver* or *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll.* Worth noting that there's a editorial apology that states "so really the title's pretty dumb but moving on." Mostly band interviews, of the hardcore variety, along with the obligatory rec and zine reviews. You got your chats with the Hope Conspiracy, Adequate, Leftover Crack, from Autumn to Ashes, Since By Man, shagheads Help (x4), Big D & the Kids Table, Beecher, Atreyu (gratuitous *Neverending Story* reference), the Filaments, MU330, Howard's Alias, and the like. (JH)
PO Box 382 / 456-458 The Strand / London, WC2 R0DZ / United Kingdom



RANT! #? / $1
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 24 pgs
I enjoyed this zine, by god! It's funny and informative. My favorite part is the "You know you grew up in the 80s if.." list. There's also a little bit of travel journal, a piece about the Gentle Strength co-op in Tempe, Arizona, where this zine is based, and a bunch of other fun stuff including some letters to the editor, a little poetry, zine and record reviews, and even a recipe for vegan french toast. Awesome! The one piece of constructive criticism I have is that

maybe more time could be spent on the layout. It's not bad or hard to read just rather sparse. Good work in any case. (BD)
PO Box 10997 / Tempe, AZ 85283

RATED ROOKIE #5 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 48 pgs
RR has a decided East Coast humor to it, that being from the Golden State, just couldn't really work for me. It's a slickly produced magazine detailing mostly the odd and absurd activities in the neighborhood. This issue has stories about bingo calling, penis burns, Laundromat fires, air conditioning, prescription drugs, Mormons, and more. Maybe I'm just a crank (maybe?), but I liked it better when zines with funny little slice of life stories were cut-and-paste-shove in-your back-pocket zines, instead of these *People* magazine influenced *magazines* folks make today. (CR)
562 / Park Place #3 / Brooklyn, NY 11238
info@ratedrookie.com

RAUMSCHIFF WUCHERPREIS #12 / $4
11 x 8 - printed - 60 pgs - German
Always in the scumfuck tradition, this issue is no different. There is a thirty-page catalogue that makes up the second half of this zine. The first half consists of interviews with the bands Verlorene Jungs and Strike Back. There is a punk forum, the Wucher News, and plenty of cool record reviews. This zine is always an enjoyable, worthwhile read. (HH)
Schmitz Postfach 100709 / 46527 Dinslaken / Germany
www.scumfucktradition.de

REGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR #3 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 36 pgs
I know this may seem lazy (and I am exhausted these days) but this zine is simply good. Really, sitting here listening to that Sect song "Cyclone" and re-reading parts of this zine makes me feel happy. Two kids writing (and writing well!) about a trip to Alaska, the dangers of mass media, the psychology of graffiti, and more. What is interesting is the non-intentional duality of the two writers. Obviously these kids spend time together and so *Regressive Behavior* comes off as a conversation. One of those "hey yeah, I was just thinking about that too, except..." (SD)
PO Box 504 / Covelo, CA 95428

REVOLUTIONARY MANIFESTO OF THE SHORT PERSON'S LIBERATION / free?
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 8 pgs
Bad joke? Or just a grumpy person who woke up on the wrong side of the bed? I guess if the oppression of short people is weighing heavily on your mind and you're ready to fight the good fight, then maybe this would get you riled up. I think there might be more pressing matters to work on though... I'm pretty sure this is a joke, but even if it is, it just wasn't very funny. And I think I qualify as short... (MD)
Lucas / 1186 Ferry St #4 / Eugene, OR 97401
smashtallocracy@yahoo.com

SHORT, FAST & LOUD #10 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 96 pgs
I figure most folx are familiar with this publication, with its focus on the more "extreme" end of the hardcore punk musical spectrum. Well done and well put together as usual,

this time around it features interviews from Brody's Militia, Betercore, and Intense Youth. There is also an article on long-gone hardcore heroes Sairaat Mielet, plus an Italian hardcore history focusing on Declino, Indigesti, and Negazione. (MT)
225 Lincoln Ave. / Cotati,CA 94931

SOBSTORY? #5 / $3
4.5 x 5.5 - offset - 66 pgs
Sobstory? isn't easy to review, because despite its (relatively) small size there's a lot of information and personality jammed into its pages. It's the tried-and-true "personal zine" concept, elevated by the fact that author/editor Andrew actually gets out and

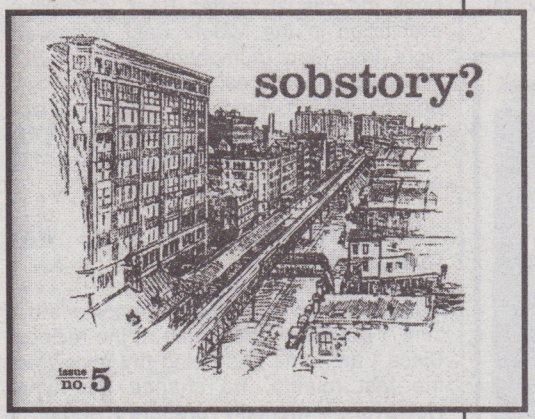
does things like hop planes to Morocco or Moscow, get himself and his traveling companions into drunken scrapes and hair-raising escapes, and view it all through his ever-ready pair of punk rock goggles. It's worthy reading for me 'cause it lets me know all the ins and outs of what he's been up to in the last rolling year (without having to ask him) but still reads well enough to hook the casual reader. Beer in Krakow, prohibition in the Middle East, desperate flight from and triumphant return to San Francisco, job woes, daily hassles, and unexpected fun. Punctuated by his own ace photography, as it were...a must, yes. (JH)
PO Box 170247 / San Francisco, CA 94117
www.sobstory.net

SOMETHING DELICIOUS THIS WAY COMES / $12
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 208 pgs
Normally when I review a cookbook or foodzine, I like to test out some of the recipes. Since I am lame and doing my reviews at the last minute, no chance this time. However, I mentally prepared some of these recipes and give this vegan cookbook a hearty thumbs up. This isn't one of those "junk food for vegans" or "30 variations on vegan slop" kind of zines. Thankfully! For those of us who are actually passionate about good food, herbs and spices, the process of preparing and cooking an elaborate dish, or something with more than four ingredients...this is a pleasant surprise. There's a great variety here: salads, appetizers, delicious sounding vegetable dishes, fake meat dishes, desserts, breads and drinks...and even a recipe for Chocolate Covered Garlic (my two favorite things together!) This cookbook shows a true creativity and love for cooking. My *only* complaint is no table of contents or index, which makes it hard to find a particular recipe. Maybe in the second edition? Also, seems to only be available via the internet. A bit pricey, but worth it! (MD)
www.kpunk.com
www.webspawner.com/users/joshuaplague

SPIDDER #8 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 38 pgs
Grimly fiendish business, *Spidder.* The mag definitely has a certain "spidery" quality to it, with its delicately printed calligraphy and scratchy illustrations of gap-toothed serial killers and wayward kittens baking pecan pies. Billing itself as the journal of "total rock 'n' roll", this ish features an interview with Big Boys/Poison 13/Bad Mother Goose/Jack o' Fire etc. svengali Tim Kerr, some gruesome fiction, a review of the many "Superstitions of the Tooth," and do-it-yourself comics with a rock 'n' roll bent. A fine read, this. (JH)
1925 Hwy 69 S / Savannah, TN 38372

STARFROSTING #6 / $2 / $1 plus stamps
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 52 pgs
If you want to read poetry and/or someone else's opihions on vegetarianism, feminism, and Wiccan religion, you won't regret picking this one up. Has an interesting and informative article on Israel by Isaiah Levine. This also has a recipe for vegetarian fried chicken and whole-wheat biscuits, which remind me of home down in the dirty South. Not a bad read although I could have

done without some of the poetry. (MF)
Olivia / PO Box 2000 / Vassar College / 124 Raymond Ave / Poughkeepsie, NY 12604
Elsa5@email.com



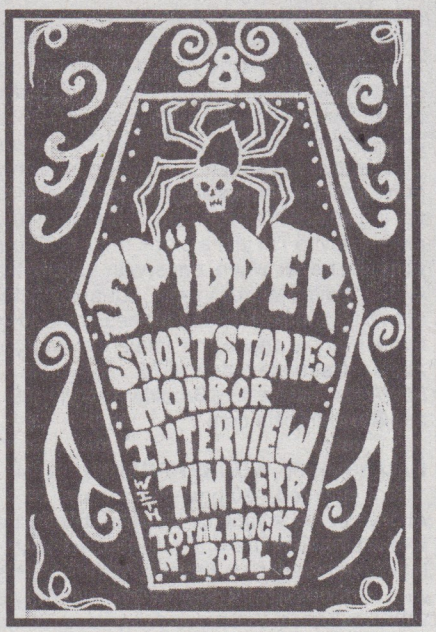
STORM WARNING #47 / $2
11 x 16 - printed - 32 pgs
Fucking Leninists! I can't believe anybody would be stoked on the founder of one of the world's shittiest police states, the Soviet Union. "Next time it will be different..." I bet they leave the jails standing, just in case some neer-do-wells (e.g. anarchists, punks) fail to see the light. Hopefully no one will send these pigs any money. It's too bad; cuz parts of this paper are a decent read. There are some well-researched and/or well-written articles about depleted uranium, conscientious objectors, and other news from the most recent Gulf War, and an optimistic reprint by Howard Zinn. The reviews are good as well. Maybe in Seattle these are laying around the laundromat and you can pass a little time and learn something. (JM)
Revolutionary Communist Party

THERE'S A CHICKEN IN YOUR TOILET #? / free?
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 36 pgs
Dream of the entire assemblage of all your elementary school teachers and former neighborhood kids naked at your house playing caricatures and drinking something fizzy and you'll have an approximation of the ridiculous and familiar yet wholesome non-sequiter feel of this zine. Who knew that "'K' is for Kevin playing the part of the suicidal kidnapper when he's really very content?" Who knew that "If worry comes in Pulses, save stubble in a Cow's bladder. When full, smoke with a friend?" Who knew that "A chicken, told verbally the message, was to fly thousands of miles from England to Africa to deliver messages to Colonialists settled there...the term "Fly By Night," used to denote a shady salesman, did not come from this practise." Who??? (JB)
www.davidhopkinsmusic.com

THIS IS ME USING MY CHOICE / $2
7.5 x 8.5 - copied - 56 pgs
With the laws on abortion becoming more and more restrictive, Christianity seeping into the punk scene, little progress in contraceptive technology that doesn't involve poisoning your body, the difficulty in obtaining a "morning after" pill, and the pervasive and judgmental attitude that even if women should have a "choice," abortion is still something wrong, shameful or irresponsible...this zine is more relevant than will probably be perceived. There are several personal stories of unplanned pregnancies, gut-wrenching fear, unsupportive friends, and trips to abortion clinics. There's no pretense here that abortion is an easy or painless decision for every woman (although it is for some)—and I appreciate the women who were willing to lay their experiences out for the rest of us to read and learn from. (MD)
PO Box 21530 / 1850 Commercial Dr. Vancouver BC / V5N 4A5 Canada

TOILET PAPER #5 / $1.50
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 37 pgs
Luckily the name of this zine is misleading. I was actually pleasantly surprised by the sincerity and urgency that came across in *Toilet Paper*. There are interviews and reviews and such, but that's not what caught my attention. What I found most interesting was the personal reflections on love and relationships and the really intense and personal account of dealing with child abuse and abuse in general. Some might find this too disturbing too read, but I think that it is very brave to put something like that out into the world. Also, it might help others who have been through similar experiences. Not all the writing is this personal however. There are also pieces on feminism, alternative education, and religion that are thought-provoking, and some more light-hearted stuff, such as dirty poetry and entertaining interviews.(BD)
c/o Alva Dittrich / Joh Kohlmann Str. 8 53913 Swisttal / Germany

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #65 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 46 pgs
The Trouble With Normal is a mostly music-related zine, with large portion of show reviews, record reviews, and a couple of articles. There is also a pretty sweet interview with a band from the DC area called The Apes, who are described as "heavy, garage and psychedelic/acid rock" with only an organ, bass, and drums. Contains an



article dedicated to the newcomers of Columbia, MO, which basically tells you what to expect when moving there, what there is to do, and is mostly directed to the student population. The show reviews include Leah Quinelle All Stars, The Cramps, and Melt Banana, just to name a few. This is a good zine—I guess that's why it's been around for eleven years. (MF)
PO Box 329 / Columbia, MO / 65205-0329
Ttwn@hotmail.com

VOICES WAKE US #7 / $1
8.5 x 11 - copied - 32 pgs
First off, I hate metal, especially predominately nationalistic, racist black metal. Ben doesn't, and therefore wastes too much time in his otherwise fine zine with such garbage. To be honest, one sentence about such tripe is too much in my mind, but whatever. The rest of his zine is filled with a fairly well done description of some of the major Japanese hardcore genres (though I do think some of his categorization is a bit off, especially with the rather vague "Music from Japan in the 80s"); an interview with Damage Deposit; record reviews; and short bits on Doom, the song "We Are 138," and a nice section called "Jumping The Shark," which looks into trying to pinpoint just where so many bands turn to shit. There are moments when I wanted to fly to New York, hunt Ben down, and argue with him about some of his statements, but that's a good thing—writing should make you react in some way or another, even if you think the author is full of shit. Which, on occasion I do. Pretty good effort overall. (MT)
Ben Parker / 5290 Lerner Hall / New York, NY 10027

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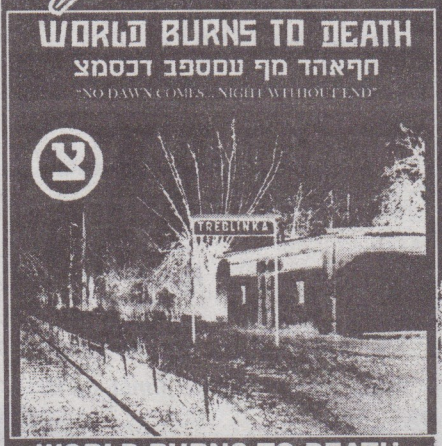

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IDENTITY PARADE: PHOTOGRAPHS BY KRISTOFER PASANEN, 1995–2000 150 Pages, Black & White, Hardcover Havoc records' first effort at publishing. Kristofer Pasanen has compiled an amazing book of his live photographs of bands taken over the last five years. Hundreds of bands are photographed from Crust to SE to Emo; see the web site for a complete list. **HC-IDP [BOOK]**

SKITSYSTEM Enkel Resa Till Rännstenen Second LP from the masters of dark Swedish hardcore. Heavy and brutal b-beat mixed with crusty HC and thrash styles. A pulverizing steamroller of Swedish hardcore. Split release with No Tolerance Records of Sweden. **LP HC1205 ☠ CD HC5005**

NINE SHOCKS TERROR Zen and the Art of Beating Your Ass The "lost" LP re-issued. This is a totally remastered and remixed second release of the hard to get first LP which came out on Devour Records of Japan in 1999. An over the top wall of thrash. Brutal no-holds-barred sonic assault. This is the most powerful material by the most intense band in hardcore today. CD contains all Nine Shocks' recorded material other than the Paying Ohmage LP. 38 tracks total, including all the 7" and comp tracks. **LP HC1204 ☠ CD HC5009**

MISERY The Early Years Includes the Born, Fed, Slaughtered, Blindead, and Children of War 7"s, the Misery side of the split LP with SDS, and the Production Through Destruction LP. 71 Minutes of Amebix style apocalyptic crust. Split release with Crimes Against Humanity Records. **CD HC5004**

HOLDING ON Just Another Day LP / CD Crucial hardcore from Minnesota's Holding On! Mixes the crunch of Judge and Chain of Strength with the anger and raw power of Negative Approach. Totally pissed off, raw, powerful Hardcore! Split release with THD, Havoc and 1% records. **LP HC1203 ☠ CD HC5003**

DS•13 Killed by the Kids One of the best bands in hardcore today. Amazing second LP of early 80s-style thrash/ HC/ punk. Excellent production, Pushead cover art. **LP HC1202 ☠ CD HC5002**

VARIOUS ARTISTS When Hell Freezes Over Compilation LP Featuring Code 13, Misery, Dreadnaught, Onward To Mayhem, Arden Chapman, Segue, Feed the Machine, Scorned, Calloused, Fallen Graces, & Pontius Pilate. All new material by 11 Minneapolis punk/ HC bands. Styles vary from street punk, to crust, to grind, but it's all punk and all Minneapolis. Split release between Havoc, Sin Fronteras, and local bands. **HC1201**

CODE 13 Complete Discography 1994–2000 All the 7"s and comp tracks with one unreleased song. **CD HC5001**

ASSEMBLY OF GOD Submission Obedience Denial New band with members of Brother Inferior, Burnpile, and Subsanity. Fast punk/HC a lot like the later Brother Inferior material. **HC7026**

VITAMIN X People that Bleed Third 7" by this Dutch SEHC band. Fast HC sound similar to DS-13 or Life's Halt. Great political SE lyrics and high energy HC. **HC7025**

TEAR IT UP S/T Ex Dead Nation, killer fast hardcore with lots of drive and energy. **HC7024**

DS•13 / CODE 13 13 song split 7" Sweden and Minnesota united in fast, raw hardcore pride. **HC7023**

REAL ENEMY / HOLDING ON Twin Cities Hardcore split 7" Political straight edge and youth crew hardcore. **HC7022.5**

NINE SHOCKS TERROR Mobile Terror Unit 7" EP Awesome raw fast thrash from Cleveland. **HC7022**

KAAOS Nukke Re-issue 1985 Finnish HC, classic stuff. **HC7021**

CLUSTERBOMBUNIT...and the Dirty Little Weapons 7" EP Brutal dis-core from Stuttgart, Germany. **HC7020**

UNITED SUPERVILLAINS (USV) Escapist 7" EP crucial fast HC similar to old Boston bands like DYS, Siege and SSD full speed ahead! **HC7019**

SPAZM 151 S/T 7" EP Second 7" by this Texas HC powerhouse. Hardcore like Black Flag, Poison Idea or Battalion of Saints. **HC7018**

DEMON SYSTEM 13 Aborted Teen Generation 7" EP U.S. press of this amazing Swedish hardcore band, fast aggressive powerful old-school hardcore. **HC7017**

CODE-13 A Part Of America Died Today 7" EP Third and best EP from Minnesota thrash punk defenders of the faith–twelve songs. **HC7016**

TAMPERE SS Kuolutt & Kuopattu 7" EP Demo and comp tracks from this crucial Finnish hardcore band of the early 80s. **HC7015**

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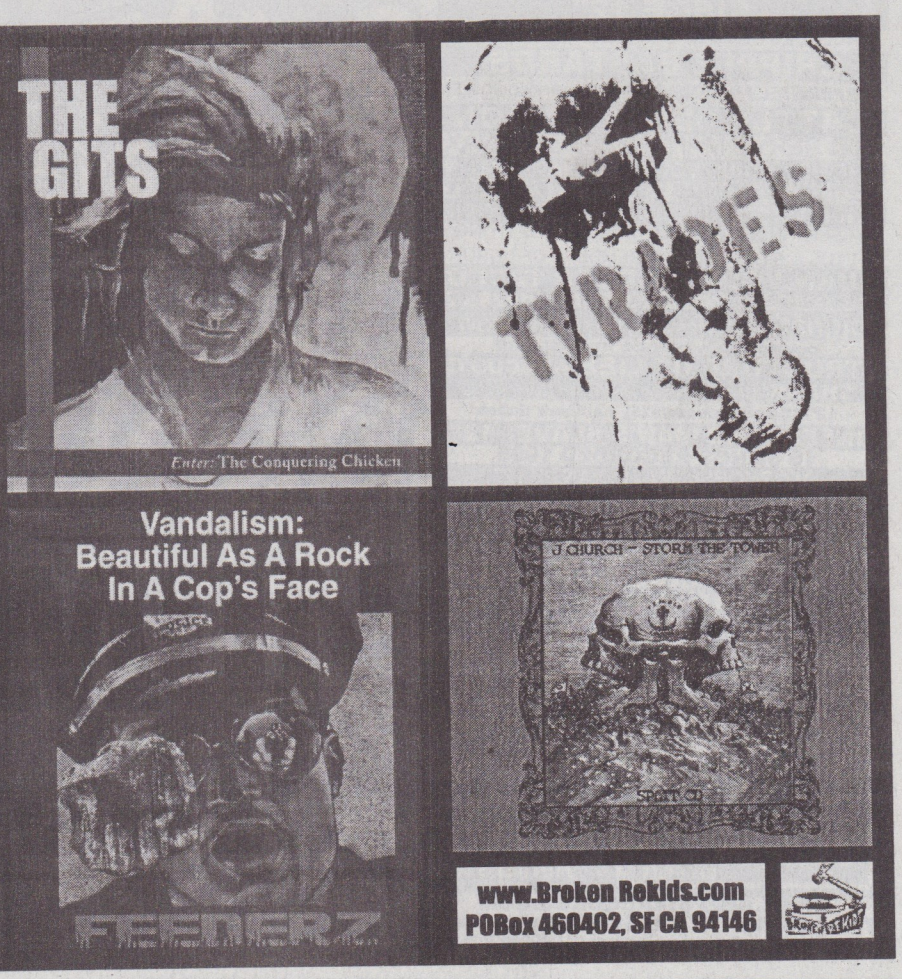

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BAND NEEDED for Half Life 7" covers compilation. Currently have tracks by Caustic Christ, Dirty Bird, Scared of Chaka, need one more to finish. Interested bands get in touch. Moo Cow/ 38 Larch Circle/ Belmont, MA 02478/ moocowrecords@netzero.com/ www.moocowrecords.com

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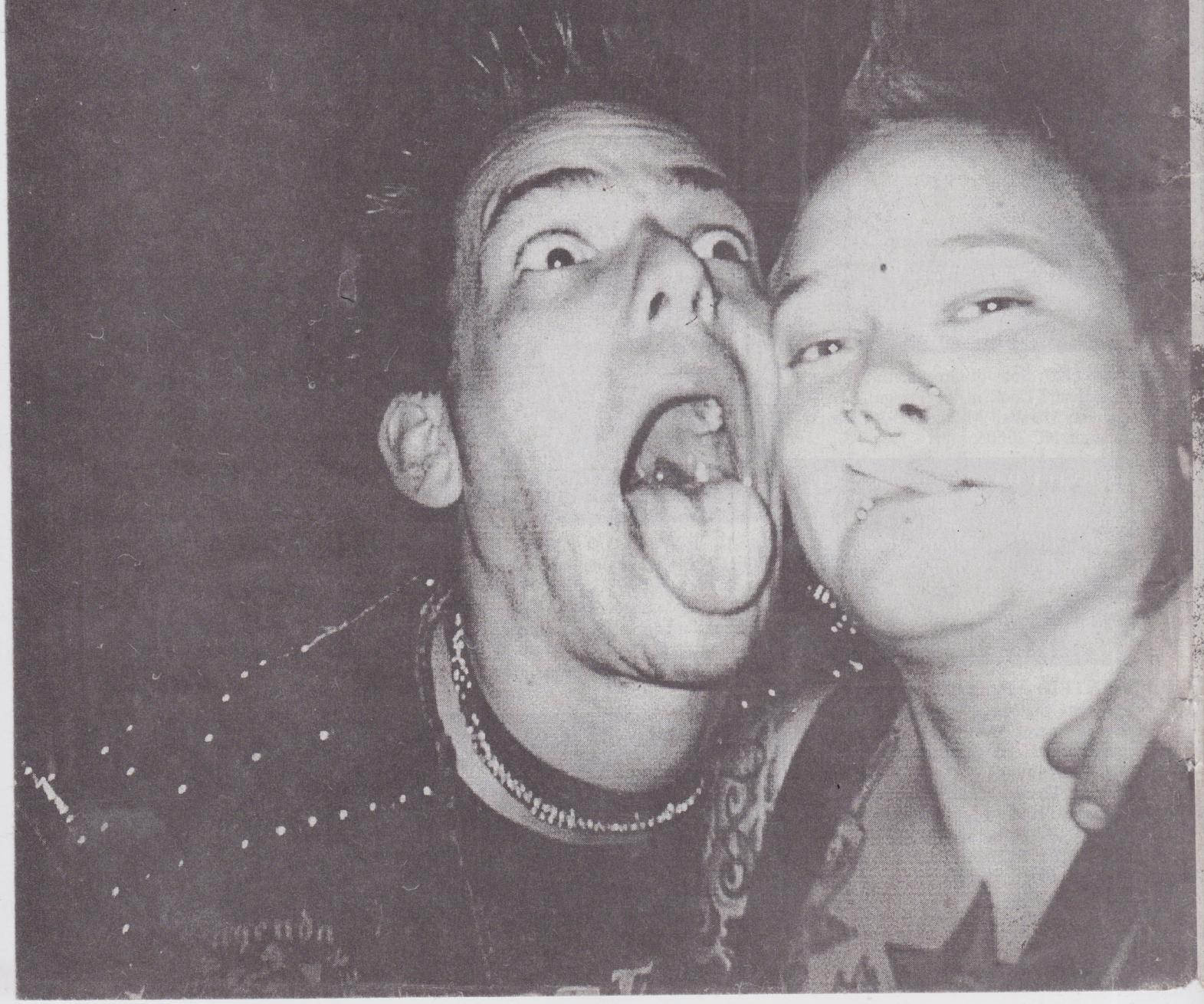
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